FREE 16-PAGE SAMPLE ISSUE

The Essential Guide To Net Entertainment

NEW!

ConNect

Issue 0 ○ May 1997

Feck Off!

From start-up to shutdown
40 gobstopping soundbites
to make your day!

ON-LINE AND INSIDE!

Star Wars
Sandra Bullock
Spike Lee
and

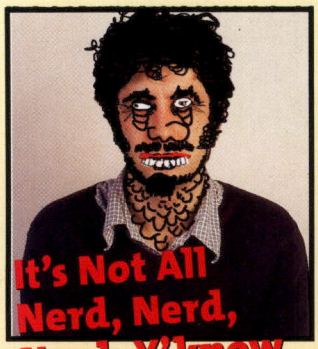
Some Cheese

OI! NET! NO!

The Net Heckler on the worst pages on the Web... EVER!

Win! A Net-ready Pentium PC!

Movies • Music • Sex • Weird • Ace new sites reviewed & rated!



It's Not All Nerd, Nerd, Nerd, Y'know

God's honest. Although it's inevitable you'll shunt into the occasional chattering geek on your travels around this chaos of democracy that is the Internet, what started out as a Global Star Trek fan club has finally grown-up and joined the media mainstream. Which means more and more people are getting on-line. Which means the content's improving by the nanosecond. Which means somebody's got to keep up with it. And preferably without lapsing into spasms of technobabble.

Connect is a brand new species of Net magazine, dedicated to bringing you the very best in entertainment on-line every month. Each issue we'll review and rate over 250 of the greatest (and lamest) new sites, tell you when and where you can Webchat with the stars, provide you with all the movie trailers, music videos and game demos you've ever wanted to down-load on our exclusive cover CD, and, as I break the tape and win this issue's longest sentence competition, a whole load more. The first issue of *Connect* will be coming to a newsagent's shelving unit near you on Thursday, May 29th.

This supplement isn't the result of squeezing a 124-page magazine into 16 pages. Neither will you find any of the material here reproduced in the first edition of *Connect*. This is simply a little something we knocked up to give you a taste of things to come. So whether or not you're connected to the Information SuperM25, I hope we've given you enough words and pictures here to cyberwhet your cyberappetite, and maybe even encourage you to test drive the wirey beast itself.

Oh, and the by the way. Anybody out there with plans to drag biros all over my face during a moment of boredom will be disappointed to learn that, in this case... Got there first.

Simon Crook
Editor

Send your Connect-related thoughts to:
scrook@futurenet.co.uk

CONNECT

Future Publishing Ltd
30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon
BA1 2BW Tel ☎ 01225 442244

Editor
Simon Crook
scrook@futurenet.co.uk

Production Editor
Eva Lauer
elauer@futurenet.co.uk

Art Editor
Richard Hood
rhood@futurenet.co.uk

Publisher
David Roberts
droberts@futurenet.co.uk

Features Editor
Mike Goldsmith
mgoldsmith@futurenet.co.uk

Ad Manager
Jackie Garford
jgarford@futurenet.co.uk
Tel ☎ 0171 447 3300

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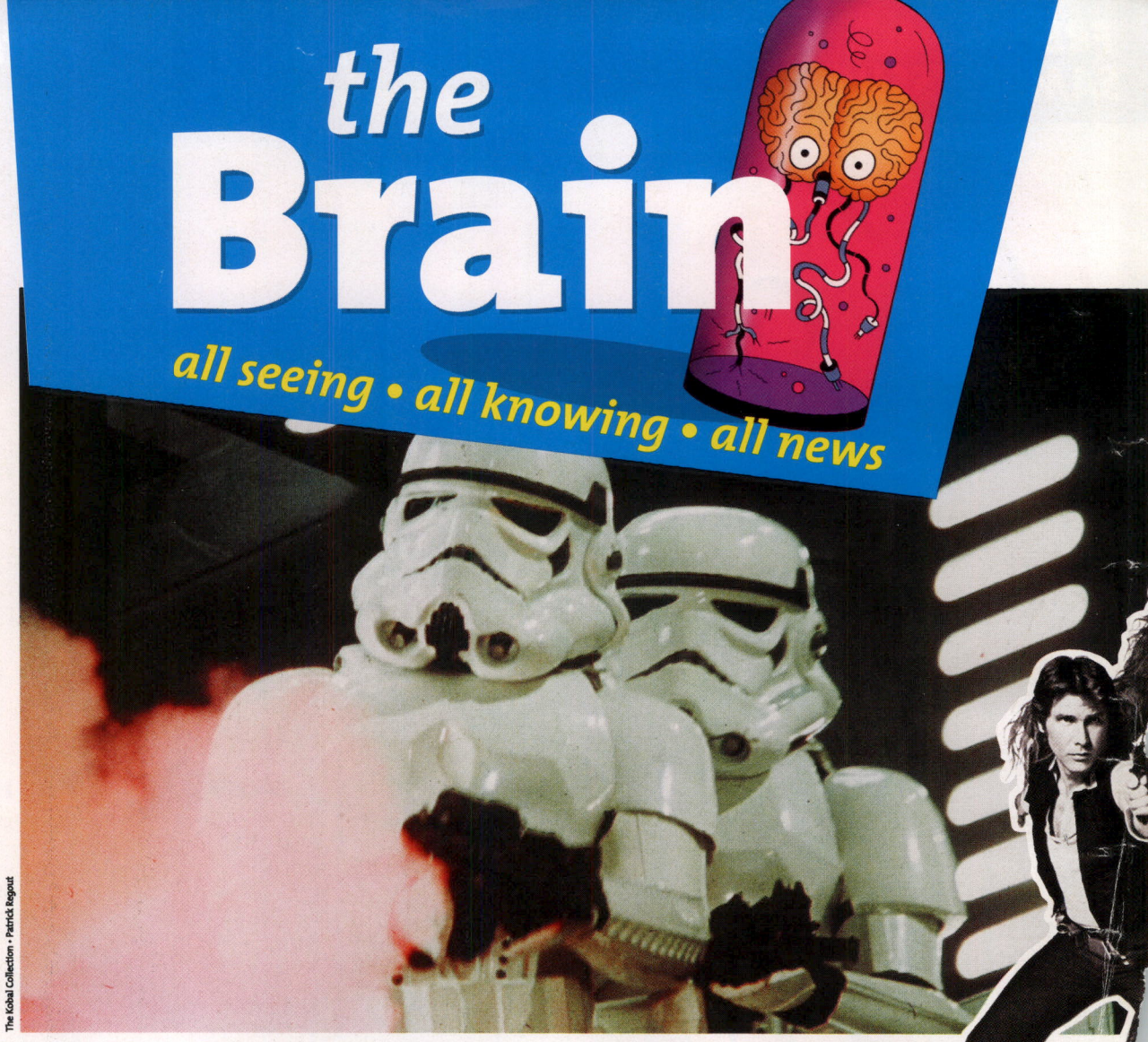
the Brain

all seeing • all knowing • all news

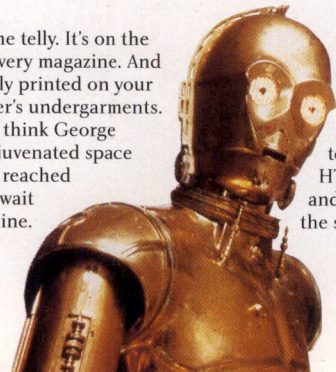


The Kobal Collection • Patrick Regout

The Empire™ Strikes Back

You've read the hype, you've swapped the Tazos and you just might have got round to seeing the film. *Star Wars* is back and the Web is now the battleground for the almighty buck.

So it's on the telly. It's on the cover of every magazine. And it's possibly printed on your kid brother's undergarments. But if you think George Lucas's rejuvenated space opera has reached saturation point, just wait until you venture on-line.



The Net has always teemed with *Star Wars* sites. Countless fan pages devoted to the galaxy-spanning myth stand testimony to the longstanding HTML allegiance of ex-Trekkies and postslacker alike. Indeed, the success of *Star Wars* is such that the trilogy's made at least three times as much from merchandising as it has from box-office receipts. With these facts in mind, it's inevitable that 20 years on the corporate big boys should see the Net as an opportunity to set those cash registers ringing anew.

Naturally, the ever-protective Lucasfilm jumped in first with its long-

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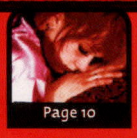
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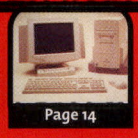
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Revenge Of The Jedi

A round-up of the best unofficial sites on this Earth Net...

Star Wars Doom:
http://users.aol.com/darthpedro/index.htm
Exactly what it says on the box.

The Jedi Temple:
http://www.afn.org/~afn37335/
Come over to the dark side... George has obviously visited.

Star Wars Drinking Game:
http://www.csd.uu.se/~dg6cgr
Get blootered on space juice with Uncle Darth.

Star Wars Encyclopedia:
http://pages.prodigy.com/skywalker/index.htm
"From Ackbar to Y-Wing!" So no 'z's then.

The Mark Hamill Home Page
http://www.markhamill.com/frameset.html
The ups and downs of an ex-Skywalker.

Star Wars Action Figures:
http://www.nfi.com/~cusick19/ StarWars.html
Baby boomer museum of plastic for the young at heart.

awaited official site **(http://www.starwars.com).** Constantly revamped to promote the latest instalment showing at Stateside multiplexes, the officially-branded photos, interviews and sound snippets inevitably attract the on-line *Star Wars* obsessive. The Lucas empire has consequently been more than zealous in guarding its trademarked interests. Operating from the University of Pennsylvania, Jason Ruspini's *Star Wars* site **(http://force.stwing.upenn.edu:8001/starwars/)** was so comprehensive as to attract the interest of LucasArts's lawyers. Only a diligent flame war by Ruspini and his fellow unofficial Jedis caused Lucas to backtrack over what is now deemed a "miscommunication".

It's familiar territory to those who've seen copyright writs delivered to various *X-Files, Millennium* and *Star Trek* unofficial pages, but while the *Star Wars* sites have been let off the legal hook, LucasArts's position as the official Net home of Luke, Leia and chums is still under attack – from its own licensees. The likes of comic company Dark Horse and US publisher Random House have always used the Internet to promote their official wares, but fresh licensees such as Pepsi and Frito Lay have now coded up an impressive set of rival sites – somewhat ironically with Lucasfilm's blessing.

Packed with official images and that all important trademark symbol, Pepsi World **(http://www.pepsi. com)** offers a set of three Commemorative Edition for $9.99 (plus proof of purchase). Snack food company Frito Lay **(http://www.fritolay.com)** goes one better with 3D motion disks (collect all 20!), 3D motion cards and, most importantly, an exclusive Obi-Wan Spirit transparent action figure. It was plastic collectibles like these that captivated everyone's imagination back in 1977, and it's the new *Star Wars* page from toy giants Hasbro **(http://starwars.hasbro.com)** that now poses the biggest threat to the official site's hit rate.

Hasbro's site is a multimedia feast. Shockwave, movie clips, chat forums and lavish QuickTime video previews of its new range are on hand to attract potential buyers. The site's designed to show LucasArts how keen Hasbro is to continue their lucrative business relationship, but unfortunately makes that Lucas site look somewhat threadbare. Given the millions of dollars that toy licences bring in for George Lucas, he's unlikely to complain. But with that new trilogy in production, fresh deals to be struck and the increasing marketing importance of the Net, don't be surprised to see the formation of LucasToys sometime before *Star Wars: Balance of the Force's* (the alleged working title) premiere in 1999. The Empire Strikes Back indeed.

Net's Gotta Have It

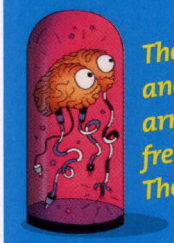
Progressive Networks signs up none other than Spike Lee to launch its RealVideo revolution.

Net events come and Net events go, but when Progessive Networks **(http://www.realaudio.com/)** wanted to show off its latest Web wizardry, it pulled out all the stops – and then some. It started with *Blur* playing the first ever RealVideo cybercast over at LiveConcerts **(http://www.liveconcerts.com),** then Hollywood rebel Spike Lee was persuaded to produce three short films exclusively viewable with RealPlayer 3.0.

Given Lee's oft-criticised adverts for Nike, American Express and Levi's, his willingness to sign up shouldn't be over-estimated, but this time it's original, creative material on offer. *John Turturro* is a one-on-one acting class with one of Lee's favourite actors, *PS 183* shows how the schoolchildren of Brownsville, New York are using their local computer lab, while *Savion Glover* has the noted choreographer of 'Bring In 'Da Noise, Bring In 'Da Funk' explaining his love of tap and dance.

While hardly an on-line *Do The Right Thing,* and with a despairingly jerky frame rate thanks to Net traffic, Lee's involvement still shows just how seriously Progressive Networks is taking its latest technological development. Head over to the Spike Lee Lobby **(http://www.timecast.com/spikelee/theater/lobby.html)** to view the results.

NEW TO the Brain...



The latest hits and random arrivals pumped fresh from The Brain.

One In The Jungle
"Drum" and "bass"-type vibes in the area! The Brain is suitably hyped to unveil Filterless Records (http://www. pirate-radio.com), London-based purveyors of the spookiest RealAudio breakbeats and white label exclusiveness from midnight every Saturday night. Boo-yaka boo-yaka, as we're sometimes wont to say. Ahem.

They've Only Just Begun
Ever wondered just where Webmasters find those tedious MIDI files that are currently plaguing the Web? The Brain knows. Step forward The Digital Carpenters (http://pi0959.kub.nl:2080/jaap/midi/index), HTML homage to Applepieville's saccharine sweethearts and dumping ground for those sub-stylophone renditions of 'We've Only Just Begun', 'Top Of The World' and 'Yesterday Once More'. The Brain shudders. Silently.

American Sly
Ah, the soundbite. Spoiler makes itself known to The Brain as a dollop of "digital pulp for the toy gun generation". Using our double secret space robots, we're able to translate that as "swanky e-zine with two parts post-punk righteousness to one Gen X retroism, with the occasional stupid animation shoved in for good measure". Still confused? Try (http://www. spoiler.com). And be even more confused.

Zat's Ze Spirit
Ah, the soundbite. Again. "The essence of living well" (or brandy, as it's also known) has swaggered on-line courtesy of that Gallic *bon vivant,* Remy Martin (http://www.remy.com). Take a virtual tour of the vineyards, muck about with their plug-ins and admire the cellar master's comedy blooming nose. Or just make like The Brain, blag a bottle and get completely pickled.

Top Of The Alcopops
If like The Brain's dribbling uncle, aka The Liver, you wish you'd never started with all this booze stuff, head over to the sprog-friendly Think About Drink (http://www.wrecked.co.uk). With some mild swearing and harsh Shockwave, learn how a single fermented grape can destroy your prepubescent life and make you start spraying gobbledegook to complete strangers. Gulp.

Tomb Raiders
With his Nick Cave hat jauntily perched on the side of his jar, The Brain proudly brings you the laugh-a-nanosecond virtual graveyard of Tombtown (http://www.tombtown.com). Stacked with 3D tombstones of the recently deceased rich and famous, just $25 can secure you a place among the decomposing glitteratti.

the Brain

NEW TO the Brain... *Continued*

And an extra ten-spot guarantees you your own personal cloud in Heaven – only kidding. For now.

Feckin' Internet!

They may not be on the Earth Television at the moment, but The Brain is happy to announce that the thicky vicars of *Father Ted* can be found on-line in their very own ace official site (http://www.channel4.co.uk/entertainment/fatherted/). Craggy Island's unholy trinity takes to the Net with much fecking, swearing and slipping of illicit substances in the scones. Father Dougal's nonsensical Pelmanism Puzzle is the obvious highlight, although Father Ted Crilly still looks like Gaye Byrne in a dog collar. What more is there to say but, "Nuns! *AARGGGHHH!*"

Browsers Beware: Little Brother Is Watching You

Ever wondered what mucky subjects people whack into their search engines? Wonder no more, for The Brain has Magellan's Search Voyeur (http://www.voyeur.mckinley.com/voyeur.cgi) well and truly bookmarked. Make like The Brain, sit back and watch other "surfers" scour the Web for "babes", "feet toe foot lover sucker fetish" and "catfish". Honest.

Grand Royal

All this Web business is fine and dandy, but The Brain's noticed that it's somewhat lacking in class. So raise your sceptres in the air and bellow a hefty "Huzzah!" three times for the launch of The British Monarchy (http://www.royal.gov.uk), the official Web throne for all things regal and tabloid worthy. And in refusing to say that the site's as dull as old pantaloons, The Brain duly hopes that the knighthood's in the post. Ma'am?

They Don't Make 'Em Like They Used To

While The Brain quite understandably enjoyed *Mars Attacks!*, his disembodied heart longs to skip through Broadway with Doris Day and rattle his lungs to a singalong song. The sights, the sounds, the down-loadable vintage movie posters... Yes, The Greatest Films (http://www.filmsite.org/) is a celluloid treasure chest guaranteed to take you back to a time when men were men, women were women and Victor Mature had breasts.

And The Winner Was...?

Fact: *Counting Crows* has the best site in the world. Fact: this is not fair.

Yes, we know it's a bit late in the year, but music e-zine unfURLed has finally announced the results of its Best Of The Web '96. Voted for by humble ol' Joe Pubclick (aka the surfing masses), the good news is that the response to the poll was unexpectedly high, and thousands flocked on-line to register their votes. The bad news is that, judging by the results, they were all American. Although The Chemical Brothers, NME.com and Ahmad Nazri's Tribute To Oasis made it to the final stages in the Best Official, Unofficial and Original Content categories, the Britpop flag barely got a flap in. The fact that there are approximately three yanks on-line for every Brit goes some way to explaining the results, but as for unfURLed's joint-sponsor MTV nabbing both the Best Content and Best Graphics award... An explanation MTV? "Um... How embarrassing. We did win our own contest. But don't blame us. You voted for us." Nonetheless, we recommend you check out the worthy American winners and perhaps send a consolatory e-mail to the UK losers.

Them Results

Best Official Site
Counting Crows

Best Fan Produced Site
Soundgarden

Best Label Site
Sony Music

Best Music Resource
Billboard On-line

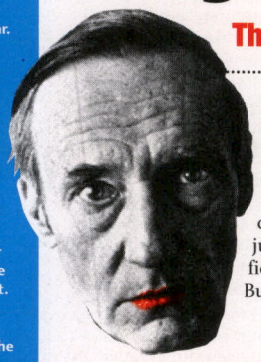
Best Content
MTV

Best Gizmo
Lollapalooza '96 Festival

You can check out the sites for yourself at http://www.unfurled.com/

Drag Powder Dust

The Naked Luncher dines out on-line.



King Mugwump and longtime Net icon William Burroughs has finally staggered Webwards, thanks to a group of San Francisco drag queens. Accompanied by fellow beat poet Allen Ginsberg, Burroughs made his debut at Soma's 24-hour bizarre cross-dressing Netathon **(http://www.ina.com/)**, contributing croaky wisdom from his home in Kansas. Given the junkie author's influence on the increasingly popular hypertext fiction, this Soma event is hopefully the first step towards an official Burroughs site. A Shockwave shooting game is, however, not planned.

Web Rings *Round and round and round they go...*

#1 Sandra Bullock

1. http://www.sandra.org/
2. http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/8589/
3. http://home.netvigator.com/~adjoin/sandra/
4. http://www.ime.net/akira/sbullock.htm
5. http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Hills/3190/
6. http://www.worldnet.net/~thousand/

Cache Cards

Slap a smiley on an e-mate's face – send them a postcard, whatever mood they're in.

Sexy

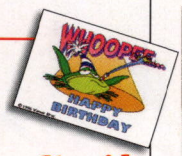
Sweet Old Porn
http://www.kulichki.com/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/lenja/postcard.pl?Collection=5

Sensuous

Romeo & Juliet
http://www.romeoandjuliet.com/test/ecard.htm

Salutations

Warner Bros
http://rw.warnerbros.com/cmp/crd-bday.htm



Stupid

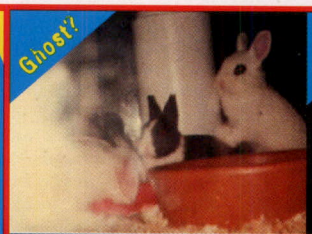
The Simpsons
http://www.foxworld.com/postcard.htm

Simian

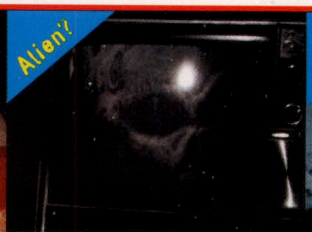
Cyberzoo
http://www.sandiegozoo.org/Postcards/index.html

Bullshit... or not?

In which the Net lies on behalf of the camera with these images rescued from The Other Side. Fake or fact? YOU DECIDE!



http://www.aone.com/~starwest/theodor.html
Theodor: phantom rabbit or fag smoke?



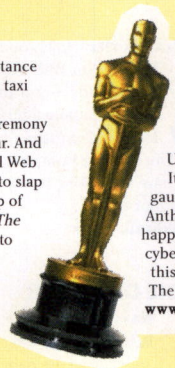
http://www.anomolous-images.com/other.html
Anomalous alien: ET TV or Channel 5?

http://home.sn.no/home/torealf/ufo.html
24th September 1972, New Mexico: sinister saucer or Capri hubcap?

Net Events Diary

Want to Webchat with the stars? We know how. And we know when. Let *Connect* gen you up on the latest events on-line. Events like these...

Web Events



Our DJs had been pressed and our acceptance speeches were scribbled on the back of a taxi receipt, but hell, we were just too darned fashionable to go... The recent Oscars ceremony was undoubtedly the luvviefest of the year. And thanks to that RealVideo-powered official Web site **(http://www.oscar.com),** we got to slap our Buffalos on the desk, sip a plastic cup of warm Bolly and stay up *reeeeally* late as *The English Patient* conquered all on its way to nine Academy Awards.

RealVideo clips juddered through, endless photos of Jenny McCarthy posing on the red carpet were scanned in and those smarmy acceptance speeches were lovingly transcribed. "The studio, I love you. And Cameron Crowe and Tom Cruise. I love you, brother! I love you man!!" No, thank *you*, Best Supporting Creep, Um, Actor, Cuba Gooding Jr.

It was left to Blighty to add a bit of style to the gaudy affair. As images of *The English Patient's* Anthony Minghella wishing his daughter Hanna happy 18th birthday beamed across the Transatlantic cyberwires, *Connect* got all emotional and declared this RealVideo stuff to be a bit of alright. Check out The Official Academy Award Site **(http://www.oscar.com)** and tell us we're wrong.

Cybercasts

Sweaty, noisy and full of social undesirables. Yup, gigs are totally ace, but what about when they're hundreds of miles away, the tickets are sold out and there's no way you can persuade your mate to drive and stay sober? Step forward the Cybercast. An instant front row pew for whatever grabs yer fancy, from *Oasis* to *Aphex Twin*. AND your mate can have a drink.

So how do you know who's playing? Eeeeasy. Grab a copy of *Connect*, feast your eyes on our exclusive Net Events Diary for the month ahead and you'll know just when and where to go for the best in on-line live music. Recent cybercasts include *Connect* CD-ROM stars *The Chemical Brothers'* RealAudio technofest for Radio One's Listen Without Prejudice week **(http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/radio1/reception/index.html)** and *Blur's* premiere RealVideo concert at House Of Blues **(http://www.liveconcerts).** In fact, we'll have exclusive songs from that concert on Issue One's CD-ROM. Your mates still don't reckon the Net's groovy? Show 'em the Net Events Diary and watch them crumble with jealousy.

Net Chats

It's all very well watching Bazza smarm all over Mel Gibson or Her Off *The O-Zone* get the inside gen on *Oasis*, but what about the questions YOU want to ask? Each month, *Connect* – and only *Connect* – will give you the full rundown of what Net chats are coming up. Here are some of the delights you can join in on.

"Shannen Doherty? Total bitch! Just kidding... Actually, she's really sweet."
Kevin Smith, slacker director of Clerks.
http://www.mrshowbiz.com

"I have never heard of a four-legged animal selling crack to school kids."
John "Cliff from Cheers" *Ratzenberger.*
http://www.chatsoup.com/

"Our mums get together every Sunday to watch our videos and smoke grass..."
The boys from Radiohead.
http://www.sonicnet.com

"I guess everyone would like to be as cool as Dirty Harry and have the right comeback at the right time, but that's impossible."
The impossibly cool Clint Eastwood.
http://www.mrshowbiz.com

"Take a famous song. Sample it, and then tell everyone. If that doesn't get you noticed..." Net chatter: "Call MTV!"
Muso purist Alex Paterson, The Orb.
http://www.sonicnet.com

"My first time was in a small house behind a football ground in Sheffield when I was just 18. A girl about eight years older than me came up to me at a night club and gave me a piece of paper that said 'I want you'. She got her way..."
Someone In Pulp *Who Isn't Jarvis.*
http://www.sonicnet.com

"I had a pretty hard time finding a cop in the airport. Finally, by the metal detector, there was a policeman. I asked him if smoking was a crime and he said 'yes'. I lit my cigarette right in front of his face and was honoured to be illegal."
The late, great acid guru, Timothy Leary.
http://www.hotwired.com/

http://www.cvn.net/~christ
Sherry Taylor's kitchen cabinet, March 1988: image of Christ or spaghetti bolognese?

http://www.parascope.com/gallery/index.htm#critters
Goatsucker victim: monster or make-up?

http://orion.adp.wisc.edu/bcorneta.html
USAF spacecraft sighting: FBI or M25?

Stuck in the Post

A round-up of the latest mailing lists coming to a cyberpostbox near you.

Ovi's World Of The Bizarre

From Israeli OAP skag dealers to America's infant bank robbers, donkey molesting to evil chocolate, take a detour from the middle-of-the-road world of current affairs with cackling Ovi at the wheel. Always unpredictable and consistently delirious, this update of all things Strange But True has the *Connect* office clutching its guts. Come: clutch with us.
Soundbite: "MOSCOW – a Russian blacksmith had been using an army canon shell as an anvil for the past ten years. That is, until it exploded and killed him. *The Komosomolskaya Pravda* newspaper reports that someone gave him the shell saying it did not contain any explosives..."
How often? Once a fortnight.
How to subscribe: Send a blank e-mail message to ovi-on@mail-list.com.

Somethin' Juicy

Hurling libel pies at Tinseltown's movers, shakers and headline makers, Florence Anthony and Kym Douglas of E! Entertainment spread some serious celebrity muck. Well, that was supposed to be the idea. Not only does the occasional glitchy ghost-mail slip through the system, but the daily gossip is at times so banal you'd get more juice by sticking a straw in a sandpit. Strictly for that certain species of celeb obsessive who spasms at the thought of learning the ins and outs of Keanu Reeves's lavatorial routine. Speaking of which...
Soundbite: "Keanu Reeves is making sure that his bowel movements are regular. The hunk drinks a coconut and cranberry juice drink at Little Friday's in Hollywood. The goo is guaranteed to make you do the do."
How often? One e-mail every morning, Monday to Friday.
How to subscribe: Send a message to majordomo@dimensionx.com with the words "subscribe juice" followed by your e-mail address.

UK Comedy Digest

A forum-style mailing list where anyone can add their gobsworth to the many-headed jackass that is British Comedy. Although most postings end up with a fence of exclamation marks and the tone veers more towards the fanny than the funny, they're an amicable enough bunch. Great for reviews of the hottest new comics on the stand-up circuit and stupid *Brass Eye* quotes. Not so great when the *Red Dwarf* lot spaz out on sci-fi.
Soundbite: "Just one last question, James. Why do you insist on ending every message with 'Fact me 'til I fart?'"
How often? Anything from two to four times a week.
How to subscribe: Fill in the form on-line at http://www.comedyweb.co.uk

Mr Brown's Movie Report

Mr Brown, aka wannabe film student Michael Dequina, reviews, rates (and more often slates) the latest Hollywood releases. Recently turned down by UCLA film school, Mr Brown has decided to establish himself as an Internet movie critic instead. And he's not half bad, despite the odd cock-up – John Hodge the author of *Trainspotting*, anyone? Eloquent and utterly independent, he scores more hits than misses in his reviews, and even scrawls the odd report on Hollywood premieres and parties he's somehow managed to blag an invite to. Dedicated chap.
Soundbite: "Just who will take home a gold baldy this year?"
How often? Every Thursday lunchtime.
How to subscribe: See http://members.tripod.com/~MrBrown/

And how could we forget...

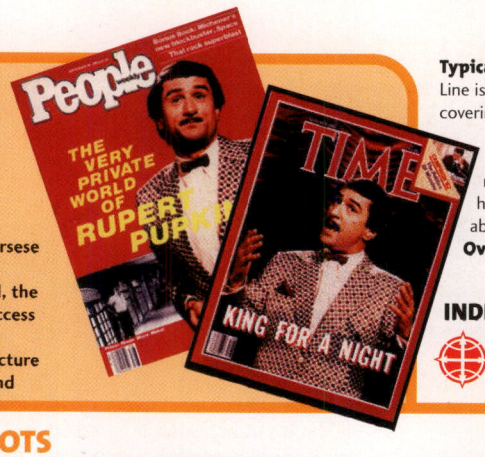
The Cheese Mailing List

Does America have any cheeses other than that revolting rubbery pancake stuff they slap in their burgers? Do the blue veins in Stilton resemble your granny's legs? For the answers to these questions, cheese chat and the occasional taste test, e-mail sub-cheese-l@globalcorp.com with the message "SUBSCRIBE CHEESE-L" and your space-mail address. If you really must.

Movies

GOING ON ABOUT FILMS: **NIGEL FLOYD**
nfloyd@technoir.win-uk.net

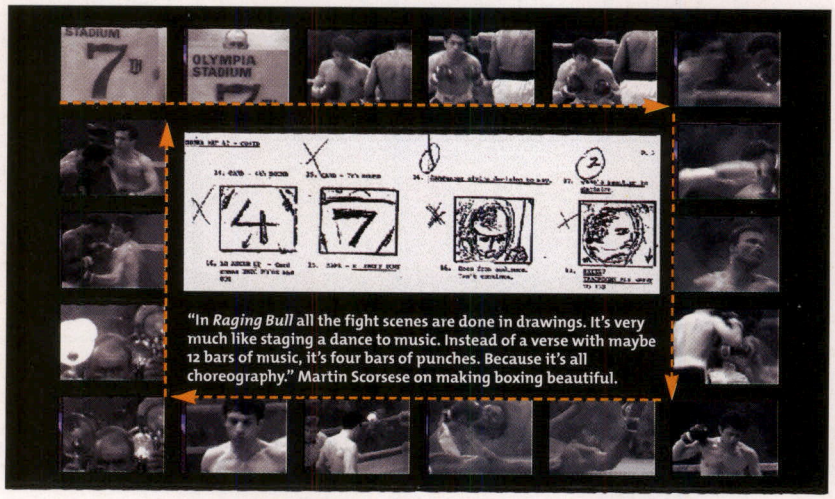
Hot Spot!



Name: AFI On-Line's Tribute To Martin Scorsese
What is it? An evocative portrait of the New York director's career to date.
Where you'll find it: http://ptd15.afionline.org/Scorsese
What's it like? Originally designed to tie in with the American Film Institute's Lifetime Achievement Award, the interface is presented as a classy timeline providing access to a chronological wealth of critical, biographical and anecdotal material. The result is an impressionistic picture rather than an exhaustive account of Scorsese's life and work. It embraces everything from his childhood trips to the cinema to early experimental shots like *The Big Shave*, through *Taxi Driver* and *Casino*, and ending with his latest movie, *Kundun*, a feature-length documentary about the Dalai Lama.
Upside: The site evokes the stylish yet visceral feel of Scorsese's work.
Downside: The timeline interface is too dictatorial, but you can use the index to slice through it.
Typical quote: "He has instincts that just turn out right for me... We identify with each other through the characters he acts out and I direct." Scorsese on Robert de Niro.

SCRAP SHOTS

One of AFI's best touches is its Evolution Of A Scene section, which traces Scorsese's movie-making techniques using video clips and production sketches. Other movies featured include *Mean Streets*, *Taxi Driver* and *Goodfellas*, but, blood bayers that we are, we've gone for a *Raging Bull* bit...



"In *Raging Bull* all the fight scenes are done in drawings. It's very much like staging a dance to music. Instead of a verse with maybe 12 bars of music, it's four bars of punches. Because it's all choreography." Martin Scorsese on making boxing beautiful.

FEAR OF FALLING

Name: Vertigo @ Cinemania On-Line
What is it? The definitive on-line guide to Hitchcock's once neglected but now lovingly restored and universally feted cinematic masterpiece.
Where you'll find it: http://cinemania.msn.com/Cinemania/features/Vertigo/VertHome.htm
What's it like? Just as James Stewart's vertigo-suffering ex-cop Scottie longs to relive his love affair with the elusive, deranged Madeleine (Kim Novak), so this superlative site inspires you to relive every icily-controlled moment of Hitchcock's sadistic, self-revealing "necrophilic romance". Interviews with James Katz and Robert Harris, the inspired restorers of the new 70mm print, are just the tip of the iceberg. There are film clips, a video interview with Kim Novak, an essay on Bernard Herrmann's haunting score, a perceptive critique by Jim Emerson and much much more.
Upside: Without question, the best Web site ever dedicated to a single film.
Downside: All other sites will now pale by comparison.
Typical quote: "It pursues the theme of false identity with such plodding persistence that, by the time the climactic cat is let out of the bag, the audience has long since had kittens." *The Nation's* critic Arthur Knight fails to observe the film's disturbing psychological subtext, way back in 1958. Doh!
Overall: ★★★★★

TINSEL TOWN TAPED

Name: Hollywood On-Line
What is it? An all-singing, all-dancing, multimedia extravaganza from Tinsletown. You name it, they've got it.
Where you'll find it: http://www.hollywood.com/
What's it like? The messy interface doesn't do justice to this veritable banquet of news, gossip, box office charts, movie clips, stills, RealAudio interviews and links. The film reviews by *LA Times* critic Kenneth Tuan are well above par for the Internet, and the pages are quick to access, with some sections housed on separate subsites. For the interactively-inclined, there are bulletin boards where you can mouth off about your favourite movie-related bugbear.
Upside: Dauntingly comprehensive and updated on a daily basis.
Downside: The bite-sized interview snippets often lack context and critical perspective.
Typical quote: "Hollywood On-Line is the premier Web site covering both Hollywood and the motion picture industry." Mr Showbiz **(http://www.mrshowbiz.com)** might have something to say about that.
Overall: ★★★

INDIE ONDE WEB

Name: indieWIRE
What is it? A Web site and mailing list dedicated to all things indie.
Where you'll find it: http://www.filmmag.com/indiewire/index.html
What's it like? The site itself is nothing to write home about. While its archive of daily news covers every aspect of the thriving independent movie-making sector, things move so quickly that the info's soon out of date. The trick here is to subscribe to the associated IndieWIRE mailing list, which drops into your e-mailbox daily. Sign-up on-line or post an e-mail to iwire@filmmag.com writing "subscribe" and your e-mail address in the subject line.
Upside: A welcome antidote to the Hollywood-centred waffle you'll usually find on the Net.
Downside: The Web site's redundant once you've subscribed to the mailing list.
Typical quote: "iLINE Ltd is a cooperative group of filmmakers and fans using new media to provide news, networking opportunities and resources to the indie film community."
Overall: ★★★★

TALKING HEADS

Name: Loquacious Noggins
What is it? To quote resident headcase John Tebbutt, this is "a non-comprehensive list of films in which at least one line of INTELLIGIBLE dialogue is spoken by a severed head".
Where you'll find it: http://www.telusplanet.net/public/whitedm/noggins.htm
What's it like? It's heads down for a post mortem on movies in which bonces bereft of bodies bespeak themselves with the help of Real Audio. Who can forget the tender words spoken by the severed head of Ash's girlfriend in *Evil Dead II?* Or the decapitated murder victim in Dario Argento's *Trauma*, whose head tries to whisper the murderer's name into the hero's ear? This could be a classic.
Upside: I laughed my head off.
Downside: It kept on talking.
Typical quote: "Oh, I remember you. You threw up on me." A decapitated zombie in Michele Soavi's mirthfully morbid *Dellamorte Dellamore*.
Overall: ★★★

"JESUS NO! IT'S NICHOLAS WITCHELL!" An about-to-be-severed Evil Head.

Music

JUMBO CHORDS: **MIKE GOLDSMITH**
mgoldsmith@futurenet.co.uk

BLUR IS THE COLOUR

Name: Graham.com
What is it? First he scribes half the new album. Now he's getting treated to his very own Web site.
Where you'll find it: http://www.nettap.com/~scl/hoax/
What's it like? While most *Blur* fanatics get all lathered up over Damon's Essex-boy yelpings or Alex's foppish fringe, there'll always be the gawky nutter who drools over Graham's twitchy guitar fumbling. A brazen shrine to all things Coxon, Graham.com is teeming with the usual pictures, sound files and wanton trivia. But grooviest of all are the Hoaxers themselves. Named in tribute to Coxon's anagrammatical pseudonym, Morgan C Hoax, check the Hoax section for hallucinogenic hypertext fiction where the girls and Graham end up in a scrap with Alanis Morrisette and Willie Nelson. *Smash Hits* was never this good.
Upside: Check out those fan drawings. Swanky!
Downside: Check out that fan poetry. Arsey!
Typical quote: "Come to my house and I'll make bangers and mash for you and fix you huge alcohols. See what yer like when you've had a bubbly skinful, you ex-acne youth!" From the demented scribblings of Graham.
Overall: ★★★

LIMAHL'S REVENGE

Name: Who Can It Be Now?
What is it? Ten '80s bands – can you spot the *Kajagoogoo?*
Where you'll find it: http://www.80s.com/who.html
What's it like? "Too shy shy/Hush hush/Eye to eye..." Just when you thought we'd buried the Devil's own decade, back it comes, courtesy of the Molly Ringwald-worshipping '80s Server. Slap in that URL, gawp at the ten pictures and then decide who's who. Win and you're rewarded with a scratch 'n' sniff photo of *Dexy's Midnight Runners*. Lose and little Jimmy Somerville comes round to your house and sings through your letterbox. Harmless fun? Ban these sicko perverts NOW!
Upside: On a good day, there's a chance you'll glimpse *The Bangles*.
Downside: On a bad day, there's a chance you'll glimpse *Twisted Sister*.
Typical quote: "Can you tell *A Flock of Seagulls* from *A-ha?*" Heaven help my snood-wearing soul but yes, I can...
Overall: ★★★

From cockney rebels to Estuary slack-a-jacks: Coxon & co in angsty yank mode.

FEAR AND CODING IN LAS VEGAS

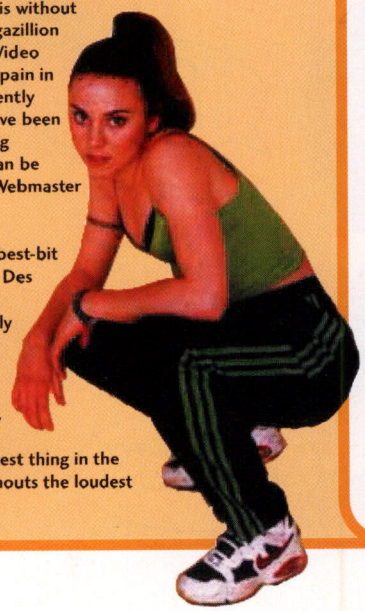
Name: RollingStone.com
What is it? On-line big brother to the US rock bible.
Where you'll find it: http://www.rollingstone.com/
What's it like? With three decades of rock reportage behind them, the sheer depth and authority of *Rolling Stone's* Web site should be enough to give current leading Web musos Addicted To Noise **(http://www.addict.com/ATN)** more than a few nightmares. Riddled with reviews, interviews and a cover archive to die for, here's a daily-updated site stuffed with rant-u-like columns. All this Transatlantic alterna-rock isn't likely to appeal to yer *Shed Seven* anorak, but with the current disposition for all things Yank and kooky, it's time to get clued up.
Upside: Well, it's near perfect.
Downside: But where's the Hunter S Thompson archive?
Typical quote: "Rock 'n' roll's sweaty sexuality can even make lousy music sound great."
Overall: ★★★★

EVERYTHING'S ALRIGHT FOREVER

Name: All Music Guide
What is it? Imagine *Record Collector* crossed with the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*...
Where you'll find it: http://www.allmusic.com/amg/music_root.html
What's it like? There are times when you really, really need to find out who drummed on Liz Phair's 'Exile In Guyville'. There are also times when you simply have to know when *The Prodigy's* first single came out. Which also means there are times when you should visit All Music Guide – the grooviest on-line music database in the world EVER! No matter how anal your request or laughable your aural illiteracy, All Music Guide will supply an answer, cough up a detailed hyperlinked discography and then whisk you off to way too many other albums and artists that you'll never ever hear – but would *reeeeally* like to.
Upside: Replaces the need to talk to that lowlife behind the counter in HM Virgin Price.
Downside: Not one solitary photo on the whole site.
Typical quote: "Furthermore, it's an album that completely ignores the static, nihilistic trends of the American indie underground, creating a fluid, creative and startlingly original work." Beck's 'Odelay, that.
Overall: ★★★★★

Hot Spot!

Name: The Spice Shack
What is it? This is the bit where we do the "zig-a-zig ah" joke, yes?
Where you'll find it: http://web.ukonline.co.uk/Members/gary.fenton/index.htm
What's it like? And, before you ask, yes *of course* it has those shots of Geri on it, but then so has every other page in the world at the moment... The Spice Shack is without doubt the funkiest of the zigazillion sites out there in Webland. Video clips, news exclusives, those pain in the arse MIDI files that currently plague the Net and more have been coded up with the unblinking dedication that only a fan can be consumed by. How close is Webmaster Gary Wenton to the insane asylum/jail? You decide.
Upside: Includes a stack of best-bit video clips of that infamous Des O'Connor interview!
Downside: You can't actually see them because of the stupid plug-in technology. BAD INTERNET!
Typical quote: "Apparently, [Emma] likes playing bingo. Which isn't exactly the spiciest thing in the world to do, but I bet she shouts the loudest when she wins!"



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF GINGER SPICE

Want to know what Geri gets up to on her day off? Well, thanks to The Spice Shack's easily-distorted photo gallery, now you can. Allegedly.

"To escape my more 'dedicated' fans, I'm currently renting a room from a kind gypsy family. 50 quid a week and all the lucky heather I can eat! Wikkid!!!"

"After a hard morning's peg selling, I have to practise for next year's World Gurning Championships. As you can see, I'm learning fast! Mental!!!"

"It's not all rest, though! I'm a wannabe (geddit?) film director and am currently storyboarding a remake of *Battleship Potemkin*. It's gonna be totally crucial! Spicey Girl Power!!!"

"After all that activity, I'm quite literally dead on my feet at the end of the day. Sometimes I'm so sleepy, I can just collapse against a tree and wake in the morning completely naked! Gee!!! Er... Spice!!! And that!!!"

Your computer goes bleep and quack and ding and bong. There is no reason for this. It ought to go "Drink!" and "Feck!" and "Doh!", just like you and your friends in a brasserie. Down-loadable Comedy Sound Files For All Occasions, we mean. Andy Lowe and Simon Crook give you aural pleasure with 40 of the Net's best samples...

Gagging

Start Up

Young Frankenstein

http://ugrad-www.cs.colorado.edu/~mahoncha/moviesnds/YoungFrank/alive.wav

Alive! It's alive! It's ALIVE!

Chris Morris

"Good evenews!"

http://www.koekie.org.uk/funnel/sounds/othead.WAV

Barney

http://www2.liglobal.com/simpsons/sounds/yoohoo.wav

Yoo hoo!

Monty Python's The Meaning Of Life

"Aaahh... Marvellous! I see that you have the machine that goes 'bing!'"

http://www.people.memphis.edu/~jgwright.sounds/mp-bing.wav

Awright John!

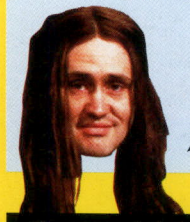
The Fast Show

http://www.morrison.demon.co.uk/cockney/alright.wav

Error

The Young Ones

http://www.tts.lth.se/Personal/daniels/sounds/badkharma.au



Bad karma!

Homer Simpson

"Doh!"

http://199.3.67.253/simpsons/doh1.wav

Stephen Fry

http://www.people.memphis.edu/~jgwright/sounds/dbledamn.wav

Damn, blast and double damn!

Spinal Tap

"Shit sandwich."

http://www.ccnet.com/~reg/spinal/Sandwich.wav

Fup off!

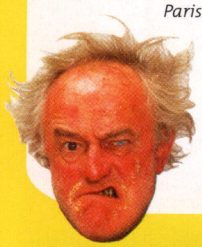
Father Jack

http://www.geocities.com/Paris/2694/fupoff.wav

Smutty

Father Jack

http://www.geocities.com/Paris/2694/girls.wav



Girls!

Chris Morris

"As long as it's got a backbone, I'll do it."

http://satsuma.sys.uea.ac.uk/~ben/sounds/backbone.wav

Barbara Windsor

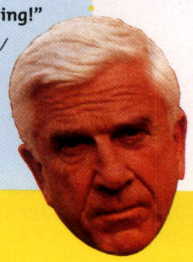
http://members.aol.com/bluebox4/carry/audio/saucy.wav

Oooh, saucy!

Are You Being Served?

"I don't want you on the floor at this time of the morning!"

http://134.173.64.2/~jrice/sounds/jealous.wav



Nice beaver!

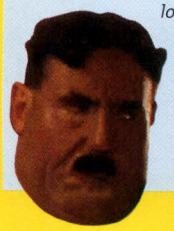
The Naked Gun

http://www.glue.umd.edu/~cahr/beaver.wav

Shut Down

Monty Python's Meaning Of Life

http://www.starbase21.com/looney/main/stuffed.wav



I couldn't eat another thing. I'm absolutely stuffed.

Big Bird

"Tootle-oo!"

http://www.wavplace.com/wavs/jan/ssbb.wav

Homer Simpson

http://199.3.67.253/simpsons/curvy.wav

Kiss my curvy butt goodbye!

Porky Pig

"That's all folks!"

http://www.wavplace.com/wavs/jan/ssbb.wav

Lovely jubbly!

Del Boy

http://www.basher.demon.co.uk/sounds/Jubbly.wav

for it!

Most, if not all, of the sounds available here are in WAV or AU format. If your computer is craving the necessary software, nudge it in the direction of the Movie Sounds Page (http://www.moviesounds.com/tools.html) and stuff it with whatever sonic tool suits you.

Spinal Tap

http://www.ccnet.com/~reg/spinal/Clevelnd.wav

Hello Cleveland! Rock 'n' roll!

The Young Ones

Viv: "You're a complete bastard and we all hate you!"

http://www.staff.dircon.net/michael/andyville/comedy/hateyou.au

Alan Partridge

http://satsuma.sys.uea.ac.uk/~ben/sounds/ahabond.wav

Aha Mr Bond!

Homer Simpson

"To start press any key. Where's the anykey?"

http://199.3.67.253/simpsons/anykey.wav

Charles Hawtry

http://members.aol.com/helst2812/carry/audio/dandann.wav

Ooh, helloooo!

Blackadder

http://www.kjsl.com/~deborah/blackadder/bibble.wav

The path of my life is strewn with cowpats from the Devil's own Satanic herd!

Network: Peter Finch

"I'm as mad as hell and I'm not gonna take this any more!"

http://www.accel.net/moviesounds/other/mad-hell.wav

Mr Burns

http://199.3.67.253/simpsons/supercom.wav

You call this a super computer?

The Incredible Hulk

"HULK WANT TO SMASH!"

http://cygnus.rsabbs.com/~ctroso/hulk/csmash.au

Full Metal Jacket

http://ugrad-www.cs.colorado.edu/~mahoncha/moviesnds/fmj/numnuts.wav

What is your major malfunction, numbnuts?

When Harry Met Sally

http://www.accel.net/moviesounds/other/sally.wav

Ooh! Ahh! Yes! Goodness! Etc!

Spinal Tap

"Lick my love-pump."

http://www.ccnet.com/~reg/spinal/Lovepump.wav

Young Frankenstein

http://ugrad-www.cs.colorado.edu/~mahoncha/moviesnds/YoungFrank/knockers.wav

What knockers!

Blackadder

"I love you, Dr Johnson. And I want to have your babies."

http://www.kjsl.com/~deborah/blackadder/babies.wav

Woody Allen

http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/1158/annieho2.wav

Don't knock masturbation. It's sex with someone I love.

Vic Reeves

http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/carl.jones/ovavu.wav

Uvavu!

Airplane!

Rex Kramer: "Some of us here, particularly me, would like to buy you a drink and shake your hand."

http://www.glue.umd.edu/~cahr/drink.wav

Monty Python's Life Of Brian

http://www.starbase21.com/looney/main/brian.html

How shall we fup off, oh Lord?

Chris Morris

"That's it. And a very firm evening to you all."

http://www.koekie.org.uk/funnel/sounds/otend.WAV

Sid James

http://members.aol.com/helst2812/carry/audio/yakyak.wav

Yakyak!

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Love & Sex

ROCKET LAUNCHER: **LOUISE BROWN**
louisebr@Websters.co.uk

FOUR PLAY FOREPLAY

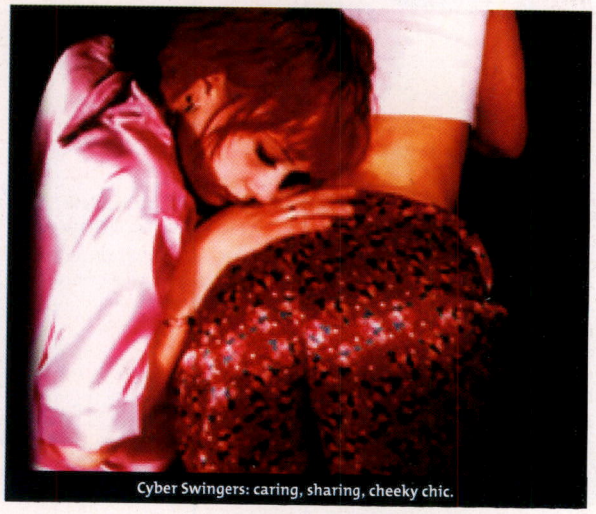
Name: Cyber Swingers
What is it? The deranged high-tech progeny of those seminal '70s wife-swapping parties.
Where you'll find it: http://www.cyberswinger.com/index.html
What's it like? A place for every type of naughtiness conceivable, with as many people as your imagination can handle. There's a sex slot machine, videos to dribble over, a digital TV channel, live strips to witness (you can join in the fun if you have the "right equipment"), and all manner of like-minded couples and saucy singles. Lone women get a free mailing address – although proving you're a single female could be interesting. This genuinely feels like a virtual community of smut, and the excellent design and use of technology promotes a classy yet pleasingly nasty feel. Among the penny whores of the Internet, it's the high-class escort girl of sites.
Upside: Positive about any sexual activity, updated regularly and glitzy design.
Downside: *Slot machines?* Is that Freudian or something?
Typical quote: "Meet this month's hot partner-swapping couples, James and Destiny and their new friends Sal and Jennifer!"
Overall: ★★★★★

HotSpot!

Name: Regarding Sex
What is it? A wholesome and non-explicit site delicately dealing with sexual technique in a loving context. The Web meets *The Waltons*, I'm saying.
Where you'll find it: http://www.regsex.com/
What's it like? There are four main sections: Ask Kim, where a qualified sex therapist calmly and competently answers questions; Cyberbods, where little artists' mannequins display a variety of sexual positions; Internet Sex Radio, where, if you have Real Audio, you can listen in on sex chat; and Love Cards, where you can send a chocolate-box drawing of an entwined couple to your e-lover. It's inoffensive without being boring and informative but never preachy. The questioners are a bit of a sad bunch, though: 40-year-old virgins, compulsive masturbators, over-excited Norwegians... But the site is just so darn *nice* – everyone feels welcome. The content and style are updated weekly, so this one's got to be nudging at your bookmarks.
Upside: Welcoming, comforting and unpatronising.
Downside: The cheesy erotic poem that won the Erotica Contest – "trembling, I hold you in my arms, my body intoxicated by your touch..." Oh purleease.
Typical quote: "Experimenting with different sexual positions can provide variety in lovemaking, solutions to problems of pain and even better penetration for pregnancy!"

PORN AGAIN

Name: The Lapis Lounge
What is it?: Searchable, inexpensive and varied filth.
Where you'll find it: http://www2.lapis.net/
What's it like? A huge, throbbing selection of photos and videos, and a particularly fast, easy-to-use search tool. Get tailor-made erotic stories and just the right photo for whatever sexual whim may take you. The quality of the pictures and videos is excellent, as are the erotic stories (honest), and there's a mixture of media that will appeal to men and women. You only get what turns you on, not what some cybergoon puts in for his own kicks. You may well be shocked 'n' disgusted by some of the content – but only if you *want* to be.
Upside: An eclectic selection...
Downside: But you don't get a particularly tantalising preview before joining.
Typical quote: "All you desire is just a mouse click away!"
Overall: ★★★



Cyber Swingers: caring, sharing, cheeky chic.

PIED EN L'AIR

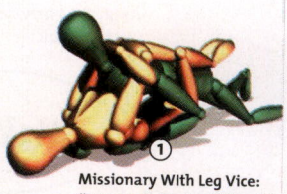
Name: Soleman's Celebrity Foot Page
What is it? Bunions and corns of the rich and famous, recently relaunched.
Where you'll find it: http://celebrityfeet.tierranet.com/
What's it like? The welcoming video of a pair of pedicured feet unpeeling a banana is a fine introduction to the world of tootsie lovers. You may have always thought of foot fetishists as unequivocally strange, but you'll find this fascinating. Inwardly digest the observations of Meg Ryan (absolutely *massive* plates of meat) and marvel at some of the saucy amateurs in the ominously-titled Misc section (mostly monsters but, mmm, nice phalanges). Soleman's introduced a search tool, although it's not yet in full working order, and he's made the site easier to navigate and provided some fine links. Nevertheless, this man needs feedback so that his site can get better and better.
Upside: Amicably odd.
Downside: The cursed search tool wasn't working, which meant I couldn't check if Kelly Le Brock's animated high kick was still there.
Typical quote: "Corryn's got lovely feet!"
Overall: ★★★

POINTER SISTERS SUCK

Name: So Many Breasts So Little Time
What is it? Paw Patties, Snuggle Pups, Sweater Puffs, Mau Maus... And a tenuous biblical reference to tits.
Where you'll find it: http://www.epix.net/~jlferri/brstwrng.html
What's it like? No disrespect, brothers and sisters, but a) why oh why is this so entertaining for men? And b) I've discovered the meaning of the phrase "amateur breast". You may have nothing against breasts – you may have a pair yourself. You might not be offended by Page Threes. But when it comes to treating women as slabs of meat while dressing it up in idiotic terms ("moody" boobs, anybody?), this really is just as disturbing as some of the more infamous hardcore porn sites out there.
Upside: Girls, if you've ever worried about the size or shape of your breasts then check out this array of flaps and udders.
Downside: All that expensive bust-firming cream really was a waste of money.
Typical quote: "Women can be dressed or nude or somewhere in between. This collection shows the transition stage of neither dressed nor nude, but getting to one or the other."
Overall: ★

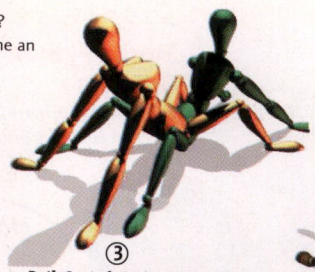
BEDROOM BARNDANCING

Want a greater variety in your love making? Got a partner made out of plasticine? Then Regarding Sex's very own animated Cyberbods can show you how to become an Olympian humper in five easy, spine-cracking steps!



① Missionary With Leg Vice: "A twist on the traditional."

② Woman On Top: "Nice for fat men."



③ Both Seated, Facing Forward: "Embarrassing visit to Casualty."

④ Raised Bottom, Legs Apart: "Sensuous wheelbarrow."

⑤ Full Standing Lift: "Like crushing a 30lb bag of spuds."

E-zines

SQUINTING: **MARK RAMSHAW**
markr@hoops.demon.co.uk

JUMPING IN AT THE BLEEP END

Name: GameSlice Weekly
What is it? A compact, bijou and authoritative look at the wonderful pixel-tinged world of computer games.
Where you'll find it: http://www.gameslice.com/
What's it like? The prince of preview sites, the fastest reporting game page in the West and the ideal place to find out what's tipped as the next big blockbuster. Using the immediacy and speed of the e-zine format to the full, Gameslice bags exclusive interviews and gets the latest gaming info way before most Earth publications. And because it's already built up a formidable reputation, software companies take it seriously, throwing all kinds of details about PC, Playstation, Saturn and Nintendo 64 releases their way. No wonder so many computer journos tap the site for hot info – and all the more reason why you should.
Upside: Fast, free and a devout worshipper at the Church Of The Exclusive Screen Shot.
Downside: The ever-so-slight risk that in covering so many gaming formats GameSlice could spread itself too thin.
Typical quote: "Can LucasArts really compete in the 3D action market without the *Star Wars* licence? Intriguing question with honest responses from Outlaws designer Daron Stinnett." Well, what did you expect from a games site?
Overall: ★★★★

SHIFT THE BED

Name: Shift Control
What is it? Home to gossip, ruminations and askew opinions on modern culture.
Where you'll find it: http://shiftcontrol.com/
What's it like? Imagine what would happen if somebody cut out the opinion pieces, bits of rambling editorial and quirky comments from a bunch of hip publications such as *The Face, FHM, Wired* and a couple of Sunday glossies. Now try to imagine all of those cuttings stuck together with a unifying theme, a natty banner and some iconic, understated graphics for that extra dash of presentation flash. The banner would very probably read Shift Control and the result would very likely resemble this Web site. Spooky.
Upside: Good words expressing entertaining opinions about interesting topics.
Downside: The issues dealt with are hardly cutting edge...
Typical quote: "The Harvey trap is one of those tricks that journalists play on pop stars every now and then, because they're ever so clever and went to university and got degrees and everything. Its most obvious manifestation was the *NME's* 'expos' of *The Happy Mondays.*" On *East 17.*
Overall: ★★★

Herbie on valium. Drivers on acid. Writer confused.

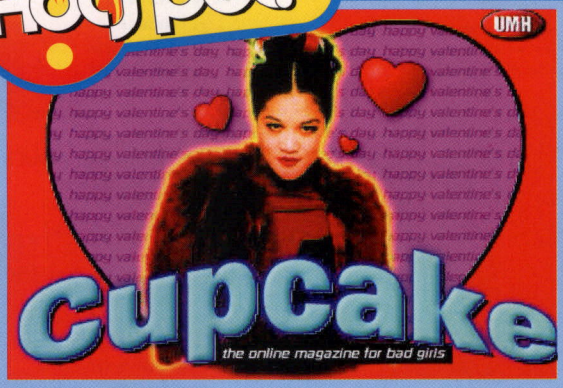
GREY AREAS

Name: Slate
What is it? Weekly comment on the social, political and ethical life of Uncle US of A.
Where you'll find it: http://www.slate.com/
What's it like? Given the potential for such subject matter to be dull and worthy, Slate is surprisingly zippy with a satisfyingly cerebral slant. A mix of topical news, reader input, summaries of other publications' stories, culture and entertainment assaults your eyes on a reassuringly crowded contents page. Even the regular cartoon strip has higher brows than most, despite storylines featuring murderous chickens.
Upside: A binge of current affairs with no indigestion.
Downside: Cerebral it may be, but Slate is hardly boiling over with life, light-heartedness or approachability.
Typical quote: "How family-planning advocates and anti-abortion activists conspired to cut family planning and increase abortions."
Overall: ★★★★

THE B'S KNEES

Name: The Astounding B Movie Monster
What is it? Home to all the monsters under your bed.
Where you'll find it: http://www.bmonster.com/
What's it like? Leaning towards the anal, as any e-zine devoted to such a cult subject has to be, but otherwise delightfully readable. Its exploration of silver screen classics such as *Stranglers Of Bombay* ("In Stranloscope!"), *Hot Rod Rumble* ("The slick chicks who fire up the big wheels!") and *Terror From The Year 5000* ("From The Unborn... A hideous she-thing!") is near faultless. There are fewer topics covered each issue than you might expect, but this is compensated for by the sheer amount of research that's obviously gone into what's there.
Upside: Wallows in rather than reveres the mondo monster trash of yesteryear.
Downside: Unless you're a B-movie geek, you won't have heard of most of the monsters.
Typical quote: "Even as Wells shocked much of the nation with the unforgettable *War of the Worlds* sham, so did Oboler incite panic with an episode detailing the horror of a giant, undulating chicken heart."
Overall: ★★★★

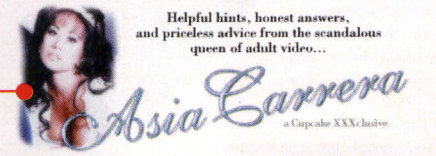
HotSpot!



Name: Cupcake
What is it? A smart, sexy and reassuringly non-PC girl guide.
Where you'll find it: http://www.cupcake.com/
What's it like? For a start, Cupcake looks incredibly stylish. The topics range from the dubious (a male writer addicted to Internet strip shows) to the dodgy (pics of "cute guys with tight butts") to the typical (sex, sex, sex, sex, sex, sex and, yes, more sex). Nevertheless, this e-zine is a blast, avoiding the "dump him/cherish him" see-saw arguments and condescension you get from the likes of *Cosmo.* Add some heavenly art to the deliciously indulgent prose and you've got a no-shit-taking, super sassy e-zine, with added hormones. Go now.
Upside: More real style than just about any other 'zine around.
Downside: Somewhat lacking in hot, controversial topics and not enough of the ol' reader interaction.
Typical quote: "That's right, it's a battle of the baldies. In one corner, the drugged out and emaciated rock god, Billy Corgan. Billy's got bad attitude and a bad haircut to match, but he's still one of the most creative men in rock... And that's sexy!" Um...

ELLE POUR ELLE

A female-orientated site that knows how to have a good time without reverting to no-brainer *Loaded*-for-girls antics? That'll be Cupcake, then.


Helpful hints, honest answers, and priceless advice from the scandalous queen of adult video...
Asia Carrera
a Cupcake XXXclusive

Why have a manifesto or hidden agenda? Cupcake does things just because it wants to. Like featuring pointless but sassy image files for you to down-load...

And exploring the world of a porn star out of sheer curiosity, rather than to condemn it.

We're not sure what a mini-interview with Alanis Morrisette is doing in there, though. Maybe it's supposed be ironic.

Weird

RAMPANT X-PHILE: **ANDY COBLEY**
acobley@mic.dundee.ac.uk

Alien skull, fossilised spacehopper or a rather stylish crash helmet for goths? Three guesses what the beards at The X-Chronicles would like you to think.

I TORT I TAW A PUTTYTAT...

Name: Cryptozoology
What is it? A cybermenagerie of mystery animals.
Where you'll find it: http://www.ncf.carleton.ca/~bz050/HomePage.cryptoz.html
What's it like? If you've heard of the Beast of Bodmin Moor and the Loch Ness monster, then you've heard of cryptozoology, the study of "hidden" animals. Ben S Roesch's site contains details from all over the world of new and unexpected beasties that have turned up in the last couple of years. Highlights include the Mediterranean flesh-eating sponge, Ice Age bats and a whole range of subterranean species from Bulgaria. There are also reports of animals believed to be extinct reappearing, such as the woolly flying squirrel and a 25 million-year-old wasp.
Upside: A level-headed rather than sensationalist approach.
Downside: Strangely enough, there's a general lack of photographic evidence here, resulting in a somewhat pictureless Web page.
Typical quote: "Actually, Cryptozoology is a very sane, scientific and interesting field."
Overall: ★★★★

AREA WHAT?

Name: Area 51 Research Centre
What is it? UFOs spinning over Nevada and other out-of-this-world phenomena.
Where you'll find it: http://www.ufomind.com/org/
What's it like? When Glenn Campbell started his Area 51 research centre, not many people outside the UFO community had heard of the place. This man and his Web site are almost single-handedly responsible for bringing a non-existent military base to the attention of the world's media. Now it's a cultural icon, turning up everywhere, from the Hollywood blandbuster *Independence Day* to the cult TV show *Dark Skies*. Come here for insights into the jittery history of Area 51 and an extensive library of UFO-related material, including details of all the major players in the field.
Upside: The top ten Las Vegas Buffets. Nice!
Downside: Area 51 is just *sooo* passé these days.
Typical quote: "Area 51 is now a 'has been' story and the Research Centre, now a real institution, has moved on to much broader issues." Yeah, right.
Overall: ★★★★

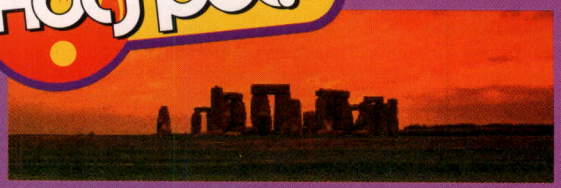
SHRIMPS FROM PLUTO

Name: Strange Magazine
What is it? An American publication about weird shit.
Where you'll find it: http://www.strangemag.com/
What's it like? Strange Magazine is one of the oldest weird shit mags on the Net, and it shows. From brief news stories to longer investigative articles and readers' own experiences, you'll find the entire spectrum of weirdness embodied here. For the usual madness, sample the Alien Skies section, a round-up of UFO stories from around the world. Or for the downright peculiar, try "Giant Shrimp In The Laundry Room" – an absolute classic dating back to 1948.
Upside: The sheer wealth of must-see material.
Downside: It's not the most frequently updated site.
Typical quote: "The long-necked, six-legged, mane-bearing Stronsay beast looked nothing like a basking shark... Even though it was." (From an article on Globsters, the zoological term for sea monster carcass research. If you're asking.)
Overall: ★★★★★

THE X-PREFIX

Name: The X-Chronicle
What is it? A paranormal/parapsychology Internet radio show.
Where you'll find it: http://www.xchronicles.com/
What's it like? A bit of a disappointment. The X-Chronicle used to contain a massive on-line photo album of peculiar-looking (and probably fake) alienesque objects. Now it's little more than an advert for the X-Chronicles radio show. Listening to excerpts from the programme is all very well, but it just doesn't compare to its former, mad-as-parsnips glory. Nevertheless, it's worth dropping in every now and then, just in case these guys have turned up something other investigators haven't.
Upside: Well, there are still one or two interesting pictures to stroke your chin over.
Downside: It's more of an advert than anything.
Typical quote: "Come and join us as we investigate... THE GREAT TRIANGLE OF THE ANCIENT GODS!"
Overall: ★★

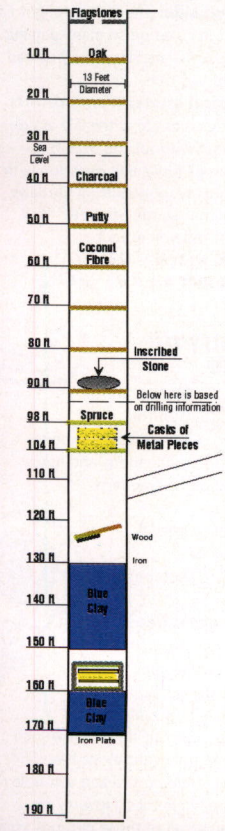
HotSpot!



Name: The Mysterious And The Unexplained
What is it? The mysteries of this world and others – cue screeching violins, thunderclapping kettle drums etc etc.
Where you'll find it: http://www.activemind.com/Mysterious/
What's it like? Explore the enigmas of Atlantis, the anomolous faces on Mars, Nostradamus, the Loch Ness Monster and Stonehenge, among others, in this *almost* scientific investigation. Rather than being some raving gipper who believes that aliens abduct him on a weekly basis, site author Bradley Keyes approaches these topics with an academic interest. Wishing you to make up your own mind, he presents the dialogues in which Plato referred to Atlantis, a map showing where it supposedly existed, and the three prevailing opinions as to The Truth.
Upside: Covers all angles without the usual loony bias.
Downside: Due to lack of spare time, the site author will be unable to update his pages as often as he used to. Probably too busy analysing his next door neighbour's soil with his astrological moon spade. Sorry.
Typical quote: "The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science." Mr Albert Einstein on the weirdy wonders of the paranormal.

THE OAK ISLAND MYSTERY

One of the more interesting investigations you'll find at The Mysterious And The Unexplained covers the Oak Island mystery. At the end of the 18th century a teenager stumbled upon a strange depression in the ground and uncovered a 100-foot deep pit said to hold pirate treasure. When he returned with friends some eight years later, they dug up a stone buried some 90-feet down. It was covered with strange markings and promised that £2 million pounds could be found just 40 feet below. Unfortunately, the pit was booby trapped and flooded with sea water via a 500-foot waterway. To this day, no-one has discovered what really lies at the base of the pit, but people keep on trying, despite the multiple drownings. Bloody idiots.



Conspiracies

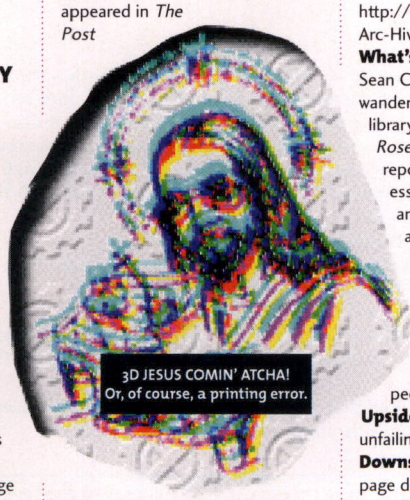
LIE DETECTOR: **WARREN ELLIS**
100617.3635@compuserve.com

MAD DOG, MADDER DOG, MADDEST DOG

Name: Impropaganda
What is it? Conspiracies as seen from the other side of that huge spliff.
Where you'll find it: http://www.impropaganda.com
What's it like? Mad and beautiful. With crazed essays, anti-censorship rants, great cartoons and chunks of damaged thought, this place is a riot. Skewed views on various conspiracy theories abound, including some highly entertaining and original new thought. Read the tongue-in-cheek tale of Jim Gilles, who led a wicked life until the Lord saved him. Puzzle over the spontaneous combustion of Mary Reeser in 1951. Boggle over tales of blundering scientists messing with nuclear power. The result? Not quite as mad as it wants you to think it is, and far cleverer than you'd like it to be.
Upside: It's funny as hell.
Downside: Too many unconstructed pages and links leading to dead ends.
Typical quote: "These pages are hooked up into the TV set, hooked up into a telephone, hooked up into a Betamax, hooked up into Clinton's big fat head, hooked up into a pocket calculator, hooked up into a home computer, hooked up to a machine gun. All held together with BIG RED STRAPS."
Overall: ★★★★

TEN BUCKS ON THE GUY ON THE KNOLL

Name: National Conspiracy League
What is it? Fantasy Football for mad people.
Where you'll find it: http://www.infi.net/~knolled/
What's it like? The League combines a whole pile of major conspiracy theory "players" – yer Bushes and Oswalds and synthetic lab-built viruses – and places them into teams. All you have to do is choose a team and follow the papers. The more media coverage your chosen group of bastards gets, the more points you score. Meanwhile, this Web site teaches you about your players. The final package is mean-spirited, horrible, and far easier on the eyes than David Baddiel.
Upside: A great idea that's been well executed.
Downside: The poor site design makes retrieving information somewhat tiresome.
Typical quote: "If Hillary Clinton appeared in *The Post* and mentioned that she accidentally shot Vince Foster, every article relating to the shooting in *The Post* on gameday would be worth five points to the Arkansas Rapids..." Simple but brilliant.
Overall: ★★★



HotSpot!

Name: Parascope News
What is it? The CNN of conspiracy theory is what it is.
Where you'll find it: http://www.parascope.com
What's it like? Once fast and dirty, now huge and clever, Parascope has become the essential news service for parapolitics. Providing headline stories on all areas of current weird news, keep up with the CIA, FBI, the latest ghost sightings and various paranormal activities. Updated frequently, each new story is given concise, intelligent treatment and is hyperlinked to various sources of research. Impartial in its coverage, Parascope allows for everyone's views, however barking, on all of its jitter-inducing topics.
Upside: Smart, quick and unmissable.
Downside: It's not on television.
Typical quote: "Something strange is happening..."

HIVE MINDS

Name: The Arc-Hive
What is it? A library of The Weird.
Where you'll find it: http://www.netizen.org/Arc-Hive/
What's it like? Imagine you're Sean Connery and you've just wandered into that huge secret library in *In The Name Of The Rose*. The Arc-Hive is a vast repository of articles and essays on conspiracy theories and other insane notions that are perhaps best left well alone. If you're looking for meaty reading on weird stuff without the usual bells and whistles, this is your first and only option. What wonderful people. We love them.
Upside: A dense collection of unfailingly entertaining writing.
Downside: One person's "simple" page design is another's "ugly as sin".
Typical quote: "Bruce Cathie noted that the pattern of nuclear tests in the Pacific appeared to occur at certain times and positions... For a while, there was a tremendous amount of interest because he had predicted the time and place of the next test."
Overall: ★★★★

THE ISRAELI ROSWELL

An excerpt from the Achihod Alien report: "On December 21, 1996, after many reports of UFO sightings in the Galilee farming village of Achihod, an alien which allegedly fell from a craft was captured by a local kibbutz resident, Tziona Damti. The creature was described as being five centimetres in length with human features, four limbs, no fingers and surrounded in a slimy material. It was further alleged that the creature was still alive on discovery but later died. Two officers arrived to investigate. It was claimed that when one police officer bent down to put the 'alien' in a bucket, it jumped on his back. Officer Asher Ben Ezra told the press that the volume of bodily fluids left on the ground by the creature was abnormal and led him to believe that there was something suspicious about it. On hearing this news, psychic Uri Geller offered the family $1 million to purchase the creature as an addition to his vast collection of curiosities." Bullshit or not? For the full story and some surprising developments, see Parascope News **(http://www.parascope.com/articles/0297/alienin.htm).**

WAKE UP! BOO!

Name: The Official Robert Anton Wilson Home Page
What is it? The electronic organ of America's premier Criminal Thinker.
Where you'll find it: http://www.rawilson.com/
What's it like? If all Web sites were as dense with ideas as this one is, brains the world over would detonate after only ten minutes on-line. Best known for co-authoring with Robert Shea the classic '70s hippy-conspiracy fantasy trilogy *Illuminatus!*, Robert Anton Wilson has misspent his life writing sanity-cracking books and shouting at people to wake up. Revel in his humorous writing style, digestible excerpts of his work, and the big, mad ideas.
Upside: Hefty chunks of Wilson's writing to peruse.
Downside: It's a bit on the smarmy side, to be honest.
Typical quote: "By the time the Midget was fifteen, he had built up a detestation for ordinary mankind that dwarfed (he hated that word) the relative misanthropies of Paul of Tarsus, Clement of Alexandria, Swift of Dublin..." Excerpt from Wilson's *Illuminatus!*
Overall: ★★★★

WIN!!!

A Net-ready Pentium PC! Worth well over a grand!

Packard Bell
www.packardbell.com

Fill in and win!

To give you the bestest Net magazine possible, we'd like to find out a bit about you. Just pick up an Earth Pen, fill in as many blanks as you can (your answers won't effect your chances of winning) and that ace Pentium PC could be yours. And don't worry – your details won't be forwarded to some mail-order-crazed company. The info you give us is strictly for our own use.

1. Do you ever access the Internet?

Yes	1. ☐
No	2. ☐

2. If you ever access the Internet, where do you access it from?
(please tick all that apply)

Home	1. ☐
Work	2. ☐
School/college/university	3. ☐
Cybercafé	4. ☐
Friend's house	5. ☐
Other (please specify)	

3. If you do access the Internet, which service providers do you use?
(please tick all that apply)

MSN	1. ☐
AOL	2. ☐
Easynet	3. ☐
Compuserve	4. ☐
Demon	5. ☐
UUnet Pipex	6. ☐
Other	7. ☐

4. If you are not on-line at home, do you intend to get connected in the next 12 months?

Yes	1. ☐
No	2. ☐

5. Have you ever bought anything via the Internet?

Yes	1. ☐
No	2. ☐

6. What are your three favourite Web sites?
(please specify name of site)

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

7. What are your three favourite albums of all time?

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

8. What are you three favourite movies of all time?

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

9. What are your three favourite TV shows of all time?

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

About You

10. Are you...?

Male	1. ☐
Female	2. ☐

11. How old are you? .....

12. What's your main type of employment?

Work full-time	1. ☐
Work part-time	2. ☐
Student	3. ☐
Still at school	4. ☐
Unemployed	5. ☐
Retired	6. ☐
Other	7. ☐

Name .....
Address .....
.....
..... Postcode .....
Daytime phone number .....
E-mail address (if applicable) .....

It! Is! True! Let your brain throttle down the information supermotorway with this once-in-a-supplement giveaway. All YOU have to do is answer a couple of questions about yourself. Durrr... Cinch!

What's on offer

This particular Pentium PC is especially designed with Joe Pubclick in mind. It comes with instant access to the Internet, featuring Packard Bell's very nice and innovative Navigator system. It also includes Packard Bell's Planet Oasis software, which ensures that even technophobes who have a problem with electric tin-openers are guaranteed the smoothest ride on the Web horse. On top of all that, it comes with the following bells 'n' whistles...

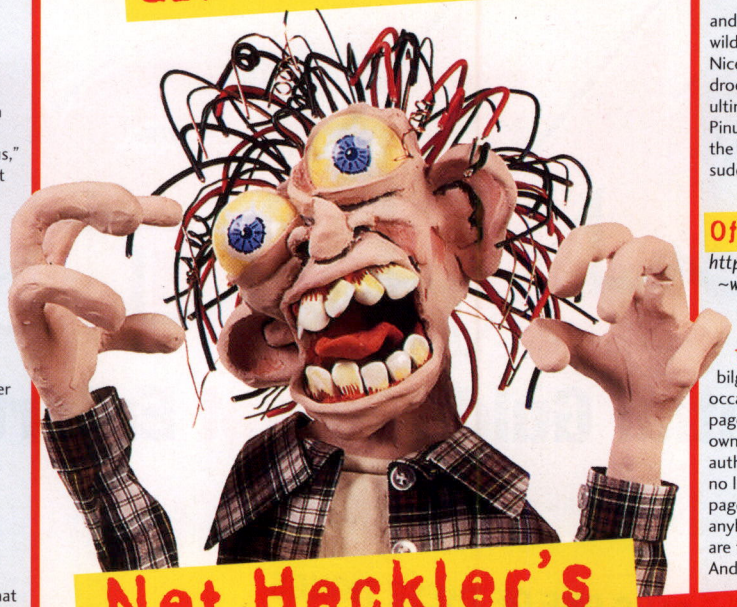
- Windows 95
- Software enabling you to access to both AOL and Compuserve's corner of the Web
- Super-fast CD-ROM drive
- Over 30 games and software applications, including SimCity Classic, Echo The Dolphin, Microsoft Entertainment Pack and Encarta '96.

And if all that isn't enough for you, five lucky runners-up will receive a six-month subscription to *Connect* magazine.

THOU SHALT OBEY THESE SIMPLE RULES

1. Send your entries to:
"Connect Compo"
Connect Magazine
Future Publishing
30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW
2. Multiple entries to the competition are not allowed.
3. Anyone who works for Future Publishing, Noiseworks or Packard Bell may not enter.
4. All entries must be received by May 29th 1997. Winners will be notified by June 13th.
5. Winners will be pulled randomly from the office balaclava. The editor's decision is often confused but eventually final.

DON'T GET MAD. GET FURIOUS. IT'S...



Net Heckler's Web Crimes

As that bloke with the lampshade on his head once sang, "Virtual insanity. Is what. We're living in." Well, this lot obviously aren't helping. Welcome to the Internet inferno. Come, join the anguished screaming and you too can stay young like me! Guilt-dodgers this month: People Who Make Crap Pages About Animals.

Offender ①

http://www.penthousemag.com/magazine/p03mar/03pets.html

The Crime: Stripping For Charity. And Then Telling Everybody About It.

The Evidence: "I never wanted to be famous," purrs Playmate Leslie Glass (36-22-35), "but a celebrity can bring a lot of attention to a cause." What's the cause? And more to the point, who's the celebrity? Ms Glass, a crossbred showbiz monstrosity somewhere between Rolf Harris and that one out of *Dallas*, is currently asking for money and moral support for a stray dog sanctuary. Leslie will do anything for her cause, and that includes posing for erotic shots of her and her pitbull and then shoving them all over the Internet. Have a look for yourself. Fund-raising and skirt raising together at last.

Offender ②

http://www.interpets.com/

The Crime: Promoting Wanton Promiscuity Among Pigs And Otters.

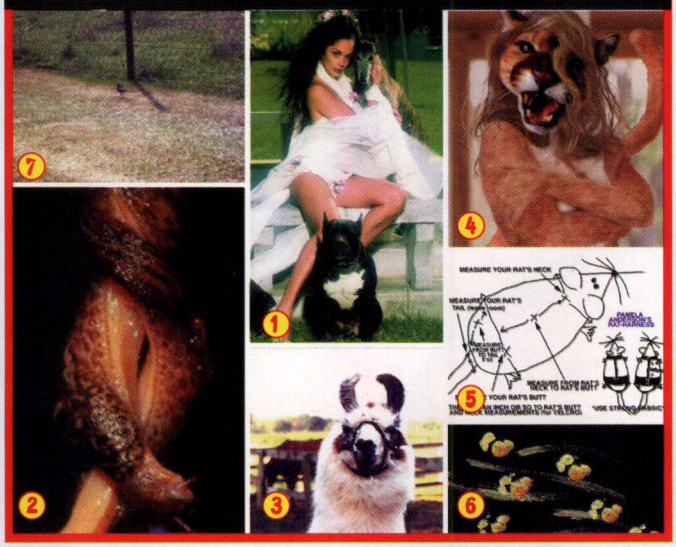
The Evidence: First, let us presume that what they say is true. And what they say is this: that everybody has at least three great ideas in their lifetime. If this is true, then we all share three equal and fair chances to acheive greatness. Good news, then, for those who, after their eureka moment, can summon the persistence, vision and will to see their great idea through to the end, score a spectacular personal goal and achieve that greatness they have been longing for. Bad news for those who can't be bothered to wait around for a great idea and instead pursue one on their many, many crap ones. Here's a page advertising a video called 'Procreation In The Wild' featuring ninety minutes of penguins having sex with each other. According to the marketing men, "you can't call yourself an animal lover until you've seen animals make love". They, along with the idea, should have been strangled at conception. Clicking on the picture of the chimp with a fag in his mouth to see even more animal sex is, let's face it, probably not one of your greatest ideas.

Offender ③

http://www.CyberArk.com/animals/telepath.htm

The Crime: Over Zealous Pursuit Of A Terrible Idea.

The Evidence: "A behaviour change that I have had success getting across telepathically is where to go potty. When I got my dog Rico at four months old, he wanted to relieve himself in my studio. I quickly let him know that was not a good place to go and sent him pictures of him going outside to relieve himself. Within one day, Rico went outside to go and never again went on my carpet! Dancer, my llama, decided he wanted to poop right at the bottom of the stairs to our back deck. I sent pictures of him going in another part of the yard and within a day, he started going there!" Thanks to the Interspecies Telepathic Communication Page, I have now been able to train my pet dog to poo and bark at the same time, and for this I thank them. But let's face it. On the evidence of this, if we *could* talk to the animals, sooner or later we'd want to tell them to shut up.



Offender ④

http://207.17.189.3/tbelding/pinup.html

The Crime: Lusting After Imaginary Cat Women .

The Evidence: 'Sexy man seeking foxy lady for fun, frolics and fantasy fulfilling in my big lair. I have a nice personality and a GSOH. You have a nice GSOH and big wild breasts. Also into centaurs. No fleas. Nice...' If you thought antiseptic nerds drooling over video game characters was the ultimate in adolescent confusion, allow Furry Pinups to scare the hell out of you. Look at the pictures and just hope his girlfriend suddenly goes bald. I did. Felt better.

Offender ⑤

http://ucunix.san.edu/~waltza/PAMELADir.html

The Crime: Leaving A Home Page Unattended.

The Evidence: Sifting through the pizzled bilge of the Internet underbelly, you occasionally come across the kind of stray page that's so mysteriously wrapped up in its own private madness that even its original author has disowned it. The kind of page with no links forward, no links back. The kind of page specifically built to be escape proof for anybody unlucky enough to bash into it. Why are they here? What do they want from us? And are there any signs of intelligence? Um... So here it is, existing without apology, marooned on the Web and serving no conceivable purpose whatsoever: the designs for Pamela Anderson's Rat Harness. If you can work out what's going on, consult your doctor immediately.

Offender ⑥

http//www.netlink.co.nz/~monpa/

The Crime: Life Wasting.

The Evidence: This one's called Why Do Cats Paint. So... Why do cats paint? Is it because they harbour a primal urge to create? Is it because they've mentally evolved in our sophisticated domestic evironment? Is it because dogs can artex? Or is it because their owners can flog the results for up to $10,000 to people whose shares in Braincell PLC recently crashed? And can their heads ever be repaired again? Aw, I don't know. But I'm not stupid. I know that if you smeared a cat's paws with acrylic paint, the first thing it's going to do is walk all over your furniture and then shred the curtains. However, if you've recently discovered that your cat has been making some half decent sketches while he's been on the phone to one of this mates, you can contact the organisation and arrange an exhibition. Although contributors are advised to note: "Please, no more scratching posts or large upholstery works." Oh come on. This is just getting stupid now...

Offender ⑦

http://chat.carleton.ca/~edubas/wildlife.html

The Crime: Good Uselessness.

The Evidence: Sort of like Spot The Ball meets *Countryfile*, this is some cyclops-eyed amateur's album of bad wildlife photography. As a famous person once said, "No animal is extinct. They're just hiding". And as the unfocused shots of sheep, too-dark shots of squirrels and can-you-see-where-it-is-because-I-can't-either shots of most species of bird click by, it looks like the entire animal kingdom is at it. Such a prime example of determined and absolute uselessness that I've been gnawing my arse-knuckles ever since.

You've had a taster. Now order the full lunch.

CoNNect

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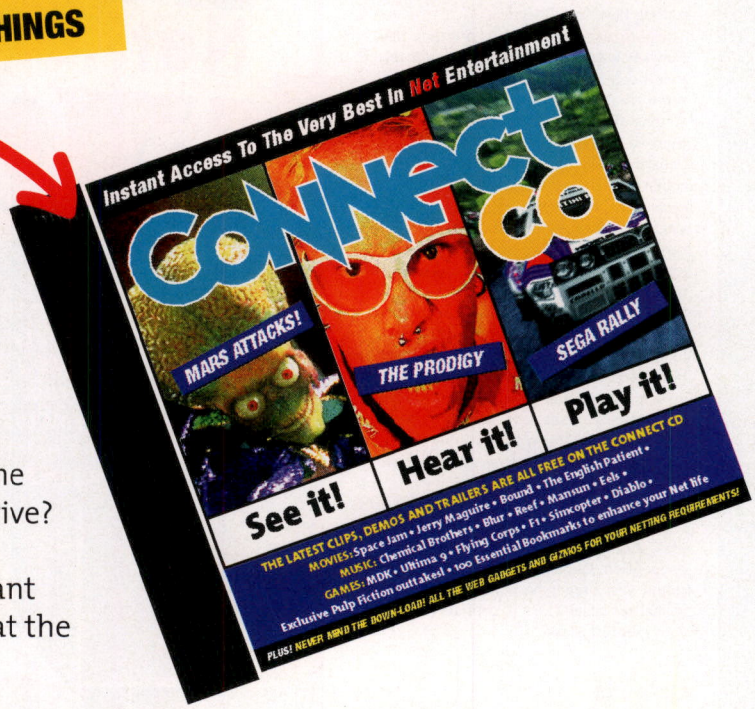
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Hits the Internet on April 14th

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How can I publish my own Web pages?
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Where can I get The Lost World trailer?
When did Tarantino play Elvis?
When is Batman & Robin released?
Will Tom Cruise win Best Actor?
What film made the most money in '96?
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What does an A flat minor look like?
What's the best TB-303 clone?
How can I play like John Lee Hooker?
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How can I increase my RAM cheaply?
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What's the best entry level bike?
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How do I stay fit?
How do I learn to bunny hop?
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Who shot Scully's sister in the X-Files?
Who stole Babylon 4?
Name the Doctor in the Who TV movie?
Who directed Star Trek:First Contact?
Who directed the smash 12 monkeys?
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Who's Jo Verso?
How can I make my cross stitch even?
When is there a craft fair near me?
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What is PlayStation's CPU?
What two chips power the Saturn?
Who created Magic: The Gathering?
Who is Shigeru Miyamoto?
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What does a conductor actually do?
What is classical music anyway?
How exactly do I pronounce Dvorak?
Is there a fan club for José Carreras?
What are the best new CDs to buy?
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What does OAV stand for?
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When was Akira first published?
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To: Clive Parker
Subject: Any Internet problem you like.

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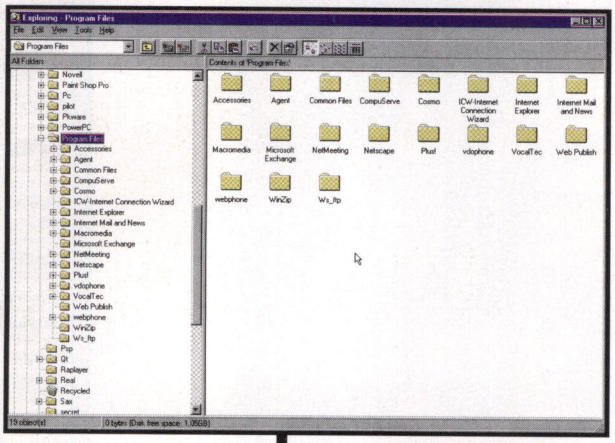

The Netscape Navigator directory is normally in the Program Files folder on your hard drive. It is placed here automatically when it is installed in Windows 95, if you're lucky. What a clever old operating system it is.

SUBJECT: Navigator plug-in problem
FROM: david.griffin@dial.pipex.com

Q I use Pipex Dial as my service provider and Windows 95 as my operating system and I recently tried to install a virtual reality viewer plug-in. However, I received an error message telling me that the plug-in could not be installed because I did not have Netscape Navigator on my PC.

This is clearly not the case because Netscape Navigator comes as part of the Pipex Dial package and, according to Windows Explorer, is in the Dial directory on the C drive. What is the problem here and how can I overcome it?

David Griffin

A *It's the old story of 16-bit connection software again. The Pipex Dial connection software you are using is a 16-bit application and all of the programs included with your Dial account are 16-bit versions. Because you are using Windows 95, you're probably trying to install the 32-bit version of the plug-in. This will not work.*

Try downloading the 16-bit version of the plug-in you want to use and installing that on your PC.

Another cause of your problems could be that Netscape Navigator isn't in its usual place. Normally, the Netscape directory is located in the Program Files folder on your hard drive. If the Netscape directory is in a different location, the plug-in installer may not be able to find it. Copy the Netscape folder into the Program Files directory and install the plug-in. After you have installed it, copy the Plug-ins folder to the version of Netscape in the Dial directory.

SUBJECT: A matter of compression
FROM: rfi1@cableol.co.uk

Q I have a 33,600bps modem and I can connect to my server at 33,600bps or 115,200bps without problems. My Internet service provider's help line says that there is no difference between the two connection speeds, but I am sure there is a difference. Am I right?

Also, I would like to tell you how good my server provider is. Cable Online has an extremely good free phone help line and I have found that its connections are always very fast at speeds of 33,600bps and above. With unlimited access at £15 per month I think Cable Online should get an honourable mention.

Rich Field

A *You are getting faster throughput at 115,200bps with your modem because of the built-in hardware compression technology. Remember, modems are rated at their maximum bits per second throughput, in this case 33,600bps. With hardware compression in action, data is being transferred at an equivalent rate of (up to) 115,200bps. The actual rate is still 33,600bps.*

You get varying results with hardware compression because many of the files you download from the Internet are already compressed. ZIP files are a good example. Because the ZIP files are already compressed, they are downloaded at the bog-standard 33,600bps rate.

When you download a large ASCII file, or a collection of Web pages, they are automatically compressed and download that much faster.

Beginners

SUBJECT: The Internet is too expensive
FROM: a.sparky@virgin.net

Q I've just joined the wonderful world of the Internet and I have quickly realised just how expensive it is. Is it true that an e-mail provider is offering an e-mail address with a freecall number? I hope you can help me...

Sid

A *It's not really that expensive to use the Internet. The only company we know of which offers free phone access is Planet Internet, now acquired by AT&T. Although the phone calls are free, you have to pay for your time on-line. This normally works out more expensive than the cost of a local call to other service providers. We see from your e-mail address that you are with Virgin Net, it only costs ten pounds a month for your account. The thing that drives the phone bill up is spending time on-line, but you can minimise the cost of your time on-line by being careful how you use your account.*

If you only want to use your account for e-mail, you can connect to the Internet for a couple of minutes to download new mail and then disconnect. Now read your mail and compose any replies off-line. This ensures that you don't run up your phone bill while thinking of replies to your mail. After you have finished, connect to the Internet and upload your messages. By operating in this way, you should only connect to the Net for a maximum of ten minutes each day. Make sure you don't connect at peak times and this will be even cheaper.

SUBJECT: More free access needed
FROM: ogunnell@glossopdalecc.demon.co.uk

Q I have a 120MHz Pentium PC and I would like to connect up to the Internet. The problem is, I can only access a phone line which accepts 0800/0500 free phone calls, are there any Internet service providers that offer 0800 free connect numbers?

Oliver Gunnell

A *The only Internet service provider with a free phone number is Planet Internet. However, as I mentioned above, Planet Internet does charge you by the minute to connect to the Internet. Contact Planet Internet at AT&T's number (☎ 0171 345 4000) for details of its current prices.*

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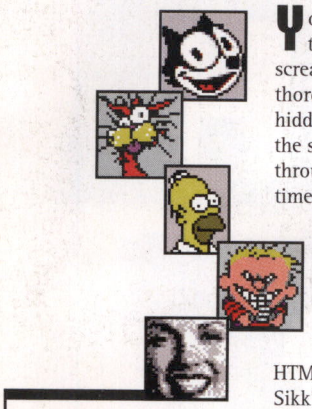
WEB GRAPHICS

.net WEB CENTRE

Web pages aren't complete until they're replete with incandescent images and pixel-perfect pictures. This month, Susan Wright shows you how to get some great free graphics.

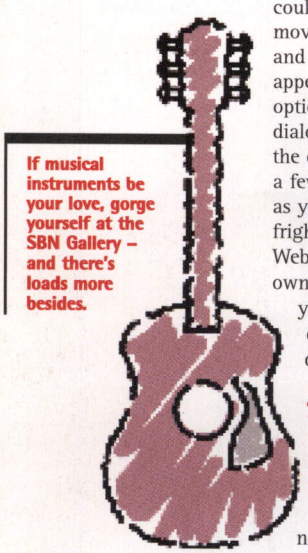


Download all your favourite icons from comic page and screen at The Icon Bazaar.

You are now Web-travelled. You've screamed down the main thoroughfares, hit the hidden alley-ways, jumped the stop lights and careered through links galore. The time has come to settle down, make your mark on the on-line world and build your own Web page. You're beginning to get to grips with all that HTML stuff with David Sikk's expert advice in each issue of **.net** but you need some decent graphics to liven things up a little. That plain colour background is a tad bland and can't you break up the text with a spiffy horizontal line? Drool on...

When you start to think about including graphics on your Web page, you have two choices – get graphics which other people have made or make them yourself. You don't have to look far to beg, borrow or steal (naughty, naughty) images because the Web is a great resource for pictures large and small. There are icons, bullets, buttons, backgrounds, bars, arrows and much much more just waiting to be included on your site. Lots of graphics are free for anyone to use, some artists ask that you display a link from your homepage to theirs and others want money. Most often, art is free for non-commercial use while commercial sites are asked to pay, which is fair enough. The cost is usually minimal and people have spent their own precious time creating original work which you can effortlessly use.

If artistic tendencies passed you by at birth then using ready-made images is the best way to start tarting up your Web pages. Downloading existing images couldn't be much easier. If you are a PC user, simply move your cursor on top of the image on a Web page and right-click your mouse button. A little pop-up menu appears and all you have to do is choose the Save As option and you will get the familiar Windows Save As... dialog box. It's a bit different for Mac users. Click on the desired image and hold down the mouse button for a few moments until you get a dialog box, then save it as you normally would any other file. Although it is frighteningly easy to steal absolutely any picture on the Web this way, be aware that someone somewhere will own the copyright for most of them. Only take when you have permission to do so. If you are in any doubt whether you have permission to use an image, don't use it. Here are a few sites to get you going.



If musical instruments be your love, gorge yourself at the SBN Gallery – and there's loads more besides.

Tips for good graphics

You'll need a fast connection to the Net if you are going to go graphics hunting – at least a 28.8 modem or the pages will take years to load and all your enthusiasm will be seriously dampened.

Remember that you do not want to have too many graphics on your own page. If your pages take too long to download, no one is going to visit you. Backgrounds can be particularly bandwidth-hungry so watch out.

Re-using the same graphics on different pages is a good trick for enabling faster browsing. A Web browser stores images in the cache on the viewer's hard disk so that the next time it reads the image it does not have to download it again but instead pulls it from the cache.

If you want your writing to be read, don't choose a psychedelic background with purple swirls. Unreadable Web pages are just not cool.

The Background Sampler

http://www.netscape.com/assist/net_sites/bg/backgrounds.html

Free? As free as the wild wind. No links requested, no other obligations

Quality: Netscape's background material has been well-used around the Web so it might be a bit common. But it's good. And varied. And very free.

Boersma, J. Page, Web

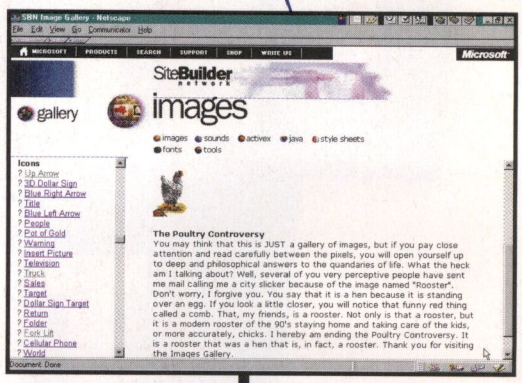
http://www.ecn.bgu.edu/users/gas52r0/Jay/home.html

Free? "Free to the Net community for non-commercial use" although a small fee is asked for some of the collection. Commercial or profit-making sites will have to pay a shareware fee.
Quality: Some beautifully drawn original artwork. Colourful and cool. The selection is not as exhaustive as Icon Bazaar but you'll be dying to put some of them on your pages. And the backgrounds are quite superb. Click on a swatch and you get an instant preview. You can also download whole sets of images in ZIP files.

The Icon Bazaar

http://www.iconbazaar.com/

Free? Non-commercial sites and not-for-profit organisations can use up to 20 images for free. More than 20 requires written permission from the creator and a prominent link back to the Icon Bazaar site. Commercial sites will need to pay according to the size of their business.
Quality: A great clip-art resource for every budding Webmaster. It has everything you could want (arrows, bullets, textures, bars, orbs) and more that you haven't even thought about (cartoons, symbols and gizmos, stars and suns, egyptian motifs). The artwork is funky, fun and quite stunning.



The mighty Microsoft turns up trumps again.

SBN Gallery – Microsoft Internet Explorer

http://www.microsoft.com/gallery/default.asp

Free? Oh yes.
Quality: Microsoft has created a great little corner of the Web with its SiteBuilder Network Gallery. The Image section is just one small part of it and conjures up backgrounds, bullets, buttons, photos and lots of wacky clip-art. There's some good stuff so dig deep and long. .net

Graphics to go

Spend money, get graphics

If you've got some spare cash and want a CD-ROM stuffed full of great graphics, take a look at Corel's Web.Graphics program. As well as enabling you to author Web pages and create animations, it includes a vast library of 7,500 images (icons, photographs and backgrounds) which you can use on your Web pages. It costs a hefty $299 from Corel at http://www.corel.com/

NEXT MONTH:

Create your own graphics using shareware graphics programs like PaintShop Pro.

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Fun & games

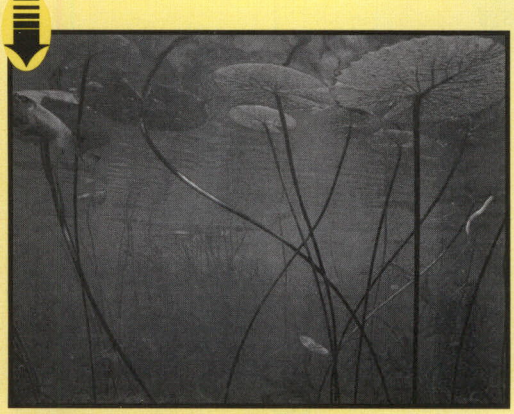
GUINNESS SCREENSAVER

When you have installed an episode of the Guinness screensaver (there are three of them on this month's CD-ROM), double-click on the Display icon in Control Panel. Select the Screensaver tab and you'll see that the Guinness screensaver has automatically installed itself as the default screensaver.

Developed by *Lost in Space/Ogilvy and Mather*
On the Web *http://www.guinness.ie/*
On the CD *CD Highlights ➠ The New Guinness Screensaver*
System requirements *Windows 3.1 or Windows 95*

The new Guinness screensaver charts the life story of the amazing cycling fish before reaching his TV debut in the famous fish-on-a-bicycle ad. There are three episodes on the disc, and two more on the Guinness Web site. You can install the additional episodes of the screensaver without running the **.net** CD-ROM interface program.
In Windows 3.1, use Program Manager ➠ File ➠ Run ➠ D:/EPISODES/EPISODE2.EXE or EPISODE5.EXE
In Windows 95, click Start ➠ Run ➠ D:/EPISODES/EPISODE2.EXE or EPISODE5.EXE
You have to install episode one first, though.

Click Settings and you'll see a fish on a bicycle. The only option you have is to enable the sound (to annoy everyone else while you're out the room). You can also disable it.



Click Preview to see the screensaver in action. You can either move the cursor to direct the fish towards the worm or let your piscean persona try to catch it on its own.

PC GAMER Game Zone

Demos of great multi-player games brought to you in association with Britain's biggest-selling PC games magazines. More next month...

POD

Developed by *UBI Soft*
On the Web *http://www.ubisoft.com/pod/*
On the CD *.net 32 ➠ Software tutorials ➠ PC Gamer Game Zone*
System requirements *Windows 95 and DirectX 3*

As 3D race games go, POD is really rather excellent, not least because of its graphics (especially if you're running it on an MMX machine or a PC with the 3DFX graphics card). The full game also features a hugely entertaining multi-player option.

POD launches you into a futuristic 3D race experience that has you burning through intense 3D environments in customisable cars while racing against up to eight simultaneous players over the Internet. Of course, you don't get the full multi-player options in the demo, but you can get a pretty good feel of the game's white-knuckle excitement.

To play the demo, you'll need Microsoft's DirectX 3 Windows 95 component, which we've also included on the CD-ROM. Go to the POD page in the PC Gamer Game Zone and you'll see a link to install DirectX 3. There are separate versions of POD for Pentium PCs, MMX machines and PCs with the 3DFX graphics card – install these from the games\pod folder on the CD using Windows Explorer .

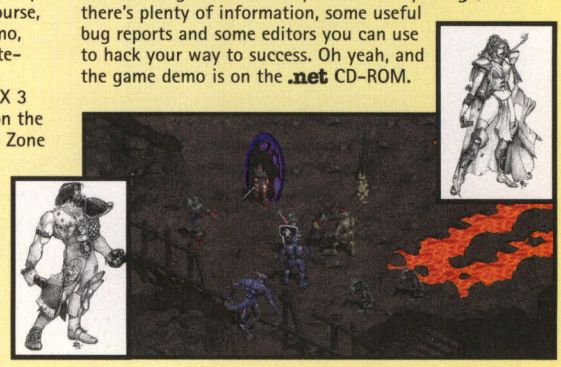
DIABLO

Developed by *Blizzard Software*
On the Web *http://www.blizzard.com/diablo/*
On the CD *.net 32 ➠ Software tutorials ➠ PC Gamer Game Zone*
System requirements *Windows 95 and DirectX 3*

Scoring a respectable 74% in PC GAMER 40, Diablo wasn't the Earth-shattering gameplay demon we'd all been hoping for after the mighty Warcraft II. But by virtue of its local area network multi-player option and Internet play on Blizzard's mightily impressive Battle.net, it has become a popular game on the Net. The official site is pretty fruity because Blizzard are into this on-line stuff in a orcish kind of way, but as ever the game's fans have set up some useful resources elsewhere on the Net.

Diablo's Lair (http://www.dreamflyr.com/~sdformo/citadel/special/diablo/lair.html) features hot tips, which are always welcome, unless of course you're playing Gloucester in an all-too-realistic production of King Lear. It's absolutely packed with pages of strategy, quest notes, magic advice, weapon tips and so on.

Cackle's **Diablo Tips** (http://www.gamedata.com/~cackle/diablo/diablo.htm looks as if it was squeezed out of the wrong end of a ZX Spectrum DTP package, but there's plenty of information, some useful bug reports and some editors you can use to hack your way to success. Oh yeah, and the game demo is on the **.net** CD-ROM.

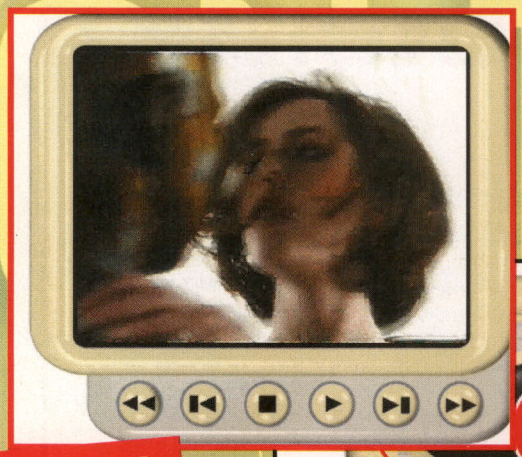


ON THE DISC

Connect cd

Simply click twice on the screen to enlarge or shrink the image!

NEVER MIND THE DOWNLOAD! It's simple, it's fun, it saves you cash and it has Gillian Anderson snogging a robot! A quick guide to the contents of the world's first Net Entertainment CD, courtesy of our brand new sister magazine *Connect*.



And if all this wasn't enough, after seeing the clip, use the scroll bars to read about exactly what you're watching, then click on the Launch button and you're inked directly to the relevant Net site. Bonzai!

MUSIC

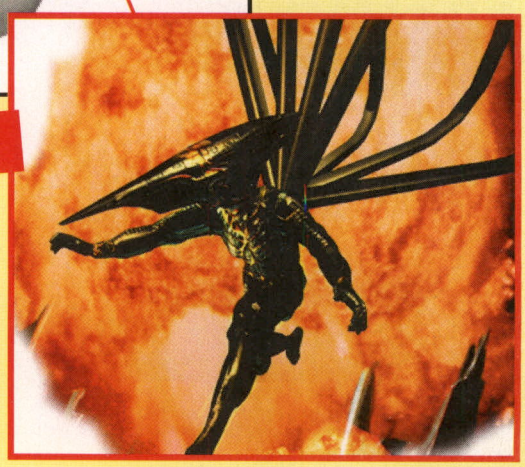
HAL featuring Gillian Anderson
Blur live!
The Chemical Brothers
Salad
Photek
My Life Story shooting gallery game
Future Sound Of London
Pooka

TELLY

Bravo Showcase
Godzilla vs Mothra
Twisted Tales
Monsters
John Noakes
Maggie Philbin
Manga Showcase
Akira
Shadow Skill
Macros Plus
Patlabor Mobile Police

MOVIES

Crying Freeman
Scream
Fever Pitch
Basquiat
Larger Than Life

GAMES

MDK
Outlaws
Oddballz
POD
(Simply click twice on the game name to install the demo.)